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STRAFFORD



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By Anthony Vandyno pinxt

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Thomas Wentworth, Earl of Strafford
from the collection of Earl Fitzwilliam at Wentworth Woodhouse

STRAFFORD

BY

LADY BURGHCLERE

AUTHOR OF "LIFE OF GEORGE VILLIERS, 2ND DUKE OF BUCKINGHAM"

"LIFE OF JAMES, 1ST DUKE OF ORMOND," ETC. ETC.

(Burghclere, Winifred Anne Henrietta Christine Gordon, Baroness)

VOLUME I

*For Loyalty is still the same,
Whether it win or lose the game;
True as the dial to the sun,
Altho' it be not shin'd upon.*

HUDIBRAS

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THIS BOOK
PLANNED DURING HIS LIFETIME
IS DEDICATED
TO
THE MEMORY OF
HERBERT, LORD BURGHCLERE

PREFACE

THE material for Strafford's Life is considerable. Knowler's two massive folio volumes, which include Sir George Radcliffe's exquisite little memoir, and Rushworth's Report of the Trial remain the chief authorities. Gardiner's *History of England*, and Sir Charles Firth's introduction to Browning's *Prose Life of Strafford* are indispensable commentaries. Dr. Hugh O'Grady's *Strafford and Ireland*, a fine piece of research work, is not only an exhaustive record of Strafford's Irish administration, but furnishes the clue to episodes hitherto obscured or misrepresented.

It is difficult for me adequately to express my gratitude to Lord Fitzwilliam for his permission to examine the hitherto unpublished Strafford MSS. preserved at Wentworth Woodhouse. They should prove of interest and pleasure alike to the historian and the general reader. Indeed, these letters alone furnish a reason for a new biography of one of our earliest Proconsuls. I have also to thank Lord Fitzwilliam for the permission to reproduce the fine portraits of Laud, Strafford, and his family by Vandyke. My thanks are also due to His Grace the Archbishop of Canterbury, who has allowed me to reproduce the Lambeth picture of Charles I., presented by him to Laud, as also to the Duke of Portland with regard to the portrait of Strafford in armour, and to the Librarian of the House of Lords for Charles I.'s letter assenting to Strafford's death.

I must also thank Lord Mostyn for the letters he put

at my disposal, Sir Almeric FitzRoy for allowing me to consult the *Privy Council Registers*, and Mr. P. H. Hore for copies and notes of documents. I owe untold gratitude to Lord Halifax, whose kind hospitality made my research work possible, and whose sympathetic encouragement made it delightful. I am indebted to Lord Kilbracken and Sir John Marriott for valuable criticism.

WINIFRED BURGHCLERE

30 GREEN STREET
LONDON, W.1
December 7, 1930

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INTRODUCTION

OF the three outstanding figures of the Great Rebellion, Charles I., Cromwell, and Strafford, the last has gained the fewest sympathies, the fewest eulogies. It is difficult to get away from Macaulay's unfavourable picture, for Macaulay set the ineffaceable stamp of genius on his portraits, with the result that in the popular estimate Strafford shares with Laud the responsibility for Charles's "personal government". This is a mistake, for Strafford's part in that unprofitable experiment was small. It is by his Irish record that he must fall or stand.

That record, the story of a single-handed fight against tremendous odds, is a story worth telling, and telling anew in the light of the mass of fresh documents which were unknown to the Whig historians of the nineteenth century. Possibly this fuller information might have modified their judgement on the "Great Apostate". They saw him as Retz saw the Cardinal de Richelieu, and their verdict was the same. They also would have said: "*Il ne gouverna pas, il foudroya*". Perhaps they could not realise, as we do, the stern battle which confronts a ruler bent on bringing order and prosperity to a land little acquainted with such blessings.

However that may be, for good or ill, what the man was, and what his work, I have tried to let Strafford himself tell in those letters which still speak with a living voice across three centuries, by turns tender and ironic, despairing and enthusiastic, letters which at least no one can call dull.

Thanks to the generosity of Lord Fitzwilliam, who has allowed me free access to his papers, I have been able to draw not only on some highly interesting letters to Laud, which—such was the discretion then observed—Knowler refrained from publishing in 1739, but also on a mass of familiar epistles which that excellent editor probably thought beneath the notice of an enlightened audience. Times have changed. The modern reader may feel that these unconsidered trifles are the clue to the man's character. They enable us to see "Black Tom Tyrant" in undress at home, as the passionately devoted husband and father, the good comrade cracking jokes and smoking a pipe with his friends, the sportsman "playing Robin Hood" in the wellnigh primæval forests, ordering portraits by the vanload from Sir Anthony, quoting Virgil and Chaucer to his correspondents. Indeed, we find him giving precise directions to Brother George with regard to the laces he was to bring back from London for his, the Lord Deputy's, new suit.

Nor is this all. To see Strafford from this angle is to realise that to him the homely joys of family life, the intimacies of friendship were of no less account than the satisfaction of his sense of power. Thus, and thus only, can we gauge the full magnitude of his final sacrifice. For face to face "with the things most valued, most feared by mortal man, Life or Death", he could yet tell Charles that to secure the "blessed agreement of sovereign and subjects he could give him the life of this world with all the cheerfulness imaginable". Whether we look on Strafford as friend or foe to our beliefs, such words, rather such deeds, must be held in honour by the men and women of his race.

W. B.

CHAPTER I

THOMAS WENTWORTH, Earl of Strafford, the eldest son of Sir William Wentworth of Wentworth Woodhouse and of Anne Atkinson, was born on Good Friday, April 13, 1593, at the house of his maternal grandfather, Sir Robert Atkinson, in Chancery Lane.

Thus the first decade of Strafford's life was passed under Elizabeth, and to the last the statesman who stands as the protagonist of Stuart rule bore the hall-mark of that earlier epoch. "*Stare super vias antiquas*" was a maxim continually in his mouth, though in many ways both in thought and action he was far ahead of the mass of his contemporaries. Indeed his brain was too alert to allow him to content himself with outworn precepts, or to leave unexplored fresh channels for the social benefit of the community. The flame-like energy, that talent for organisation which approaches the creator's genius, an impatience of theories only equalled by a passionate faith in practical remedies, all, however, designate Thomas Wentworth as a survival from the generation which had known the stern necessities of a struggle for national existence. Victory had crowned that struggle. The menace of the foreigner withdrawn, opinion no longer demanded the subordination of individual beliefs to the behest of the Governor, who alone could ride out the storm. Moreover, if her Stuart successors made their panoply of Elizabeth's prerogative, they were unquickened by her spirit. A deep gulf had therefore parted the world of Strafford's

manhood from that of his childhood, though he himself, by early associations, by tradition, and by temperament, was steeled against conversion to the new ideals. Heredity, too, had contributed not a little to the moulding of the champion of autocracy. On his father's side Thomas Wentworth came of the class who were the very backbone of rural life, the country gentlemen born and trained to command and responsibility, many of them permeated with the scholarship of the Renaissance, yet in close touch with the actualities of everyday country existence, the squires and knights, baronets and landowners whose fine probity was unstained by contact with the Court. As these gentlemen had been England's living bulwark during the perils of the past reign, so in opposing camps they were to impart a character of high-mindedness to the approaching struggle never approached in any other popular revolution. And of this stock, for good and ill, the family of Wentworth was a typical representative.

In the year 1593, Wentworth Woodhouse, which was to be so dear to the most illustrious of its sons, had already been identified with the name of Wentworth for close on three centuries. The first of the race had held the manor of the Canons of Bolton. By 1300, William de Wentworth, the head of the clan, was honoured with Edward I.'s summons to raise and lead 400 men-at-arms to the tryst at Carlisle. Such a commission could only have been issued to a man of mark in the Ridings; whilst it is to be hoped that William's recompense for his services on this occasion was not limited to the permissions subsequently accorded him, to divert a highway that passed too near his house, and to celebrate Mass in his private oratory.¹ The rewards devised by impecunious sovereigns for their faithful lieges were often, however, as economical as they were singular. So late as 1528, Henry VIII. gravely informed all his

¹ Hunter's *South Yorkshire*, vol. ii. pp. 81-2.

subjects "as well of Spiritual Pre-eminence and Dignity as of Temporal Authority" that in "tender consideration of the diseases and infirmities our well beloved Subject Thomas Wentworth of Wentworth Woodhouse daily sustenteth in his Hede", he was licensed to use and wear "his Bonet upon his Hede, as well as in our Presence as elsewhere at his Liberty and Pleasure".¹

Other and more financially important benefactions may have been bestowed on the House of Wentworth. But since no other records of royal grants are forthcoming, we may presume that the Wentworths owed their steady growth in prosperity and consideration to their own wise stewardship of William de Wentworth's inheritance. Prudent marriages enlarged their borders, the noblest families showing themselves eager to match their daughters and heiresses with the lords of Wentworth Woodhouse. Thus, although Margaret Gascoigne, in whose veins ran the blood of Percy and Nevill, brought twelve manors and two baronies in dowry to her husband, Strafford's grandfather, the alliance could not be accounted unequal. This Thomas Wentworth was indeed a notable personage in his county and generation. In 1587, the year preceding the sailing of the Armada, he was appointed High Sheriff, and at his death, after bequeathing all his armour in perpetuity to Wentworth Woodhouse, he was enabled to bestow large legacies of money, plate, and gold chains on his younger children.

On the distaff side, Strafford's ancestors, who were settled at Stowell in Gloucestershire, were less considerable. From the testamentary memorandum drawn up by Sir William for his son's guidance, it is clear, however, that he dated not only his happiness but his luck from his marriage with Anne Atkinson. The passage is so characteristic of

¹ *The Earl of Strafford's Letters and Despatches*, edited by William Knowler, 1739, vol. ii. App. 438.

the good man of that age counting up his blessings, that it deserves quotation.

"It pleased God", says Sir William, "to send me your mother for my wife, being a Woman endowed with many virtues, and brought £2000 well paid, after which time it pleased God of His most merciful Goodness, for the space of five years or thereabouts, to bless me with all kinds of Worldly Comforts that my heart could desire, namely contentment of mind, youth, health, strength, children even as I would, plenty of all things that I could wish for, Friends many, and known enemys or open adversaries not any. I sued no man and no man sued me."¹

Even when the inevitable lean years followed on these fat years, bringing "many suites and displeasures", and the spending of £4000, yet by "the merciful goodness of God some perils of my life" were avoided, and the account remained on the credit side.

Curiously enough, there is no allusion to his mother in the Earl's voluminous correspondence, though his eldest daughter was named Anne after her grandmother. Lady Wentworth's early death may, however, account for Strafford's silence, since if any credit is to be given either to Sir William's last tribute or to the epitaph erected to her memory by her "loving and sorrowful husband in his great love and affection to her, and in his doleful duty careful and diligent" she must have been worthy of the affection of her children.

Most saintlike woman that I ever knew,
Right wise and sober, secret, constant, good,
Truly religious, greatly given to prayer,
She clothed the naked, she relieved the poor,
She failed not to do the works of mercy,
Despised the world and without fear or grudge
Gave up her soul to her Creator's hand,
Seeming to fall asleep, but not to die.²

¹ Fitzwilliam MSS.: Sir William Wentworth to Sir Thomas Wentworth, 1607.

² Hunter's *South Yorkshire*, vol. ii. p. 83.

So runs the inscription in Wentworth Church, and if similar eulogies are characteristic of the age when it was chiselled, yet these particular lines have a ring of sincerity not frequently found in the contemporary attempts to cheat Time of his Revenge; and indeed such a woman, scorning the world's judgement, fearless of the issues of Life and Death, reticent of speech, "right wise", and of a "constant heart", was well fitted to be mother to Thomas Wentworth.

No anecdotes of Strafford's childhood and youth have survived, though like the heroes of antiquity he owns a prenatal legend, preserved for us in the memoirs of Sir Philip Warwick. According to this author, Sir William Wentworth, during a dangerous illness, fell into a slumber so profound that his wife, thinking the end had come, touched him gently, upon which he awoke and reproached her bitterly for interrupting a dream of supreme interest.

"For", said he, "I dreamed one appeared to me, assuring me I should have a son" (for until then he had none) "who should be a very great and eminent man, but—and in this instant thou didst awake me, whereby I am bereaved of the knowledge of the further fortune of the child." "This", says Sir Philip, "I heard when this Lord was but in the ascent of his greatness, and long before his fall, and afterwards conferring with some of his highest relations I found the tradition was not disowned."¹

In default of anecdotes we know, however, that Strafford was baptized at St. Dunstan's-in-the-West, and that he was educated at St. John's, Cambridge, the college founded by his illustrious ancestress, Margaret, Duchess of Somerset, grandmother to Henry VIII., where, like his contemporary Milton, he matriculated at the age of fourteen. For all his natural earnestness, Thomas Wentworth, judging from the sole reminiscence he has preserved

¹ *Memoirs of Sir Philip Warwick*, p. 112.

to us, must nevertheless have had a refreshing streak of boyishness in his composition. Writing to Laud many years later, and chaffing the Archbishop on his difficulty to understand a despatch, the Lord Deputy remarks:

“By this little you may find how a whole letter in cipher would have tormented, I believe puzzled your Lordship more than ever you were in Thomas Aquinas, his *secunda secundaes*; pray God, I be right for my Latine, for I never read the book, and yet, in faith, a Cosin of mine, when I came first to Cambridge, about fourteen years of age, advised me in any sort to read Thomas his Sums, as the fittest book I could begin with. He took me to be a forward, pregnant boy, sure, but in those days, of all things, I hated great volumes, and so kept myself far enough from falling into such a snare, I will awarrant you.”¹

With further regard to Strafford's college career, it is a surmise that the “Mr. Wentworth senior”, and “Mr. Wentworth junior”, who matriculated from St. John's as Fellow Commoners on December 13, 1608, were the future Earl of Strafford and his brother William. The College accounts for that year also show a payment of ten shillings from the “two Mr. Wentworths” for the use of the tennis court. And in 1613, the Bursar acknowledges the receipt of £5:6:8 “for Mr. Thomas Wentworth's and Mr. Smyth's plate”, which may have been a gift to the College from Wentworth, since, in the list of the silver subsequently melted down for Charles I.'s service, occurs the mention of “Mr. Thomas Wentworth's pot with two ears”.

In his correspondence with Laud, Strafford often alludes to his connection with Cambridge and St. John's; and when writing to thank the Provost and Fellows for their congratulations on his earldom, he assures them that he is “mindful of the ancient favours I received in that Society

¹ Fitzwilliam MSS.: Wentworth to Laud, March 7, 1633.

of Saint John's whilst I was a student there".¹ But, unlike the great majority of men, save in the solitary instance quoted, he never diverges into reminiscences of his university career. Nor is he more communicative regarding his experience at the Inner Temple, where he and his brother were admitted as students on October 31, 1608. It must, however, have been at this period that he indited the following dutiful epistle to his father, differing, as he says himself, from the usual letters of young men to their parents:

"I thank God you have so carefully provided for me that I need not with others to direct any complaining letters of my wants, which is for the most part the subject of young men's letters, who are far removed from their friends, but seeing it hath pleased you (by reason of your tender care) never to have been awanting to me, I shall be ever ready to show myself that to which nature itself, and my duty proceeding from my own sincere soul, and your favours have long invited me, which is to be your

"Most loving and dutiful son,

"T. WENTWORTH."²

We can only conjecture that his studies at Cambridge and the Temple must have been no less "thorow" than his other undertakings, and that during those years he laid the foundations of his wide culture and curiously accurate legal knowledge. Nor was Wentworth an exception to the rule that the most valuable portion of education is self-bestowed and self-imposed. His vigorous English prose, stately, yet fervid, the eloquence to which the inveterate hate of his enemies could alone make them insensible, had been wrought to perfection by close and unremitting attention. He had sedulously attained "this

¹ *Letters*, vol. ii. p. 390: Lord Wentworth to Provost and Fellows of Saint John's, Cambridge, Covent Garden, February 1639.

² Fitzwilliam MSS.: Thomas Wentworth to his father, Sir William Wentworth, London, November 13 (no date).

perfection, first by reading well-penned Authors in French, English and Latin, and observing their expressions, secondly by hearing of eloquent men, which he did diligently in sermons and public speeches, thirdly by a very great Care and Industry which he used when he was young, in Penning his Epistles, and missives of what subject soever. I learned", his friend Sir George Radcliffe continues, "one rule of him which I think worthy to be remembered. When he met with a well-penned Oration or Tract upon any Subject or Question, he framed a Speech upon the same argument, inventing and disposing what seemed fit to be said upon that subject before he read the Book to compare his own with the author, then reading the Book, compare his own with the author, note his own defects and the Author's art and Fulness, whereby he observed all that was in the Author more strictly, and might better judge of his own wants, and supply them."¹

On the same principle he took vast pains to improve the elements of legal knowledge which he had received at the Temple. He learnt much from attending the Law Courts in the interests of a young nephew who was his ward, and finally became so well versed in these subjects that, layman though he was, he was called into consultation on some knotty question of the Poor Law by one of His Majesty's Judges.

The business of life began betimes, since in 1611 all academic courses ended; he was knighted and formally betrothed to Lady Margaret Clifford, the eldest daughter of Francis, Earl of Cumberland. From the point of view of birth, a matter on which Thomas Wentworth set great store, Lady Margaret was an eminently desirable bride; and *mariage de convenance* though it probably was, she must have proved attractive to the bridegroom, since Lord Cumberland described him as an "earnest and affectionate

¹ *Letters*, vol. ii. App. 435; Sir George Radcliffe's *Life*.

suitor".¹ As for the young lady herself, she was reported to be "well pleased and contented". Thus everything promised happiness; and the marriage took place at Londesborough on October 22, 1611.

Almost immediately after the ceremony, following the not unusual fashion of the day, Wentworth set forth on the travels which were to complete his education. His companion was a Fellow of University College, Oxford, Mr. Charles Greenwood, who remained his lifelong friend. Together they visited Montpellier and Marseilles, lingering at Orleans rather than hastening to Paris, where Thomas Wentworth, anxious to spare the parental purse, foresaw that expenses would be heavy.² At Paris, however, they eventually arrived to find and make acquaintance with Lord Clifford, Wentworth's brother-in-law.

"We are exceedingly well pleased and well satisfied", wrote Lord Cumberland to the latter, "to see by both your letters soe good a beginning of love and kyndness between you and your brother-in-law. Your sister thinks herself much bound to you for entertayning her husband so kyndly, which he hath highly commended in his letters to her."³

During the next thirty years the "love and kindness" then initiated between the two boys remained unimpaired. As it was in the beginning, so it was to the end. In the account-book kept by Henry, Lord Cumberland's controller, we find under the fateful day of May 11, 1641, the entry:

"For Wateridge to the Tower when his Lordship went to take leave of my Lord of Strafford, the day afore he was executed, and for wine and beare at Bridgeford with Sir Gervase Clifton and boat hyre back, six shillings."

¹ Whitaker's *History and Antiquities of Craven*, p. 284: Earl of Cumberland to Lord Clifford, Londesborough, October 5, 1611.

² Fitzwilliam MSS.: T. Wentworth to Sir William Wentworth.

³ Whitaker, *idem*, p. 285: Lord Cumberland to Lord Clifford, January 13, 1612/13.

From Paris Wentworth and Greenwood proceeded to Venice, where they were hospitably entertained by the English Ambassador, Sir Henry Wotton. It was a fruitful meeting for the young traveller, since he gained thereby the friendship of a remarkable man and in his intercourse with that wise diplomat almost certainly acquired the unusual knowledge of foreign affairs which influenced all his subsequent policy.

In 1613, after fourteen months' wandering, Wentworth returned to England. In the spring of 1614 he was returned as the representative of his shire to the Parliament which James I.'s financial embarrassments had driven him to summon. The tide of popular feeling ran strongly against the Government; and the majority of the new members arrived at Westminster determined to pay out no subsidies without an adequate return in the matter of reforms, such as the abolition of the hated "impositions"—customs imposed without Parliamentary sanction. From the first the atmosphere was stormy, and Winwood, the new Secretary of State, was not the man to retrieve the situation for his master. Indeed, Wentworth's belief that Parliaments needed only skilful shepherding to become the sovereign's allies may have originated during the weeks he sat silent on the benches of the House of Commons watching a tactless official struggling awkwardly with a difficult situation.

That at his introduction to political life Wentworth did not immediately plunge into the passionate debates around him has occasioned some surprise. To expect him to have done so would be to misread his character and settled principles. Twenty years later he told the nephew to whom he acted a father's part:

"till such time as experience hath ripened your judgment it shall be great wisdom and advantage to distrust yourself and to fortify your youth by the counsel of your more

aged friends before you undertake anything of consequence. It was the course that I governed myself by after my Father's death, with great advantage to myself and affairs, and yet my breeding abroad had shewn me more of the world than yours hath done and I had natural Reason like other men, only I confess I did in all things distrust myself."¹

Autobiographical reminiscences are not always accurate, but Radcliffe confirms Wentworth's statement. At the height of his power the great Proconsul encouraged the utmost plain speaking from those he trusted with regard to his affairs public and private, submitting any important letters to their criticisms, and accepting their rebukes even on such a tender point as his "cholerick" disposition.

"I can say", wrote Radcliffe, "that I, one of his most intimate friends, never gained more upon his Trust and affection than by this Freedom with him in telling him of his weaknesses", for, Radcliffe pathetically concludes, "Wentworth was a man and not an angel; yet such a man as made a conscience of his ways and did endeavour to grow in virtue and victory over himself."²

The "Parliament of Love", as James somewhat prematurely christened it, met on April 5 and was dissolved by the irate monarch on June 7, after much wrangling between the three estates, without having achieved anything tangible, and having certainly earned its popular nickname of the "Addled Parliament".

So ended Sir Thomas Wentworth's first experience of political life, an experience which, for all its brevity, his alert intelligence undoubtedly turned to account.

¹ *Letters*, vol. i. p. 169: Wentworth to Sir William Savile.

² *Idem*, vol. ii. App. 435; *Life of Strafford*, by Sir George Radcliffe.

CHAPTER II

IN 1614 Sir William Wentworth died, leaving behind him exhortations which show him to be contemporary of Polonius.

"You", he told Thomas Wentworth, "in the name of God I charge ever to bear a good conscience, which is to a man very exceeding comfort, also to be pityfull to the Poor and bountifull to them; faithfull to your friends in their honest causes, yet very careful how you trust any too much, for dear friends today, are many times mortall enemys tomorrow. Never be unthankfull for a good turn; Govern your tongue with all circumspection and moderation. Be patient, be wise, and fear God, and then no doubt God will establish you and your seed after you, if they serve Him in like manner, to which Almighty God and our merciful Father be all praise, honour and glory both now and forever.

"So be it."¹

His father's blessing carried also a rich heritage, for, when barely of age, Thomas Wentworth found himself the possessor of great estates, two fine houses, Gawthorp and Wentworth Woodhouse, and a rent roll of £6000, the equivalent in spending capacity to an income of £40,000 in our days. His early accession to wealth, which has so frequently proved injurious to pleasure-loving natures, probably rather strengthened Wentworth's ingrained sense

¹ Fitzwilliam MSS.: Sir William Wentworth to Strafford, 1607.

of responsibility and austere self-control. The eldest of twelve children, he took his duties as head of the house and guardian to his younger brothers and sisters seriously. Browning has described him "as kind but exacting" to his near relations.¹ Kind he undoubtedly was, even according to the modern standard in such matters, while I doubt whether his contemporaries, on the strength of a single letter, the only evidence produced, would have considered him exacting.

In the seventeenth century there was a radical difference in the treatment accorded to the heir and his younger brothers. In many a household the cadet's position was worse than that of his father's servants, for he received no wage, while he had learnt no trade to earn his bread. In the case of the Wentworths, this glaring difference between the pleasant things, and indeed the necessities, of life arbitrarily allotted to the several children did not exist. With the assent and the full approval of his successor, as Thomas Wentworth himself tells us in a letter written many years later to his trusty friend Charles Greenwood, Sir William Wentworth had made ample provision for his younger children.

"How often," says Wentworth, "how often hath he been pleased to excuse unto me the liberal provisions taken forth of my estate for my brothers and sisters? And as often hath been assured by me, I thought nothing too much that he had done for them, and yet I can make it confidently appear that he left not my estate better to me than my grandfather left it to him by £200 a year, nay some that understand it very well have, upon speech had with me about it, been very confident he left it me rather worse than better than he received it."

Conscious of his own magnanimity in this respect,

¹ *Prose Life of Strafford*, by Robert Browning, p. 23.

Wentworth would have been scarcely human if he had not resented what he evidently regarded as ingratitude from those whom he had sought to serve. I will quote in full the passage on which Browning founds the charge of being "exacting".

"My sister Elizabeth", he says, "writes me a letter concerning my Brother Matthew's estate which I know not how to answer, till I see the will, nor do I know which it is she claims whether money alone, or the Rent Charge forth of my Lands, or both. Therefore I desire the Copy of the will may be sent me, and her Demand, and then she shall have my answer. This Brother that she saith was so dear unto her, had well tutored her, or she him, being the couple of all the Children of my Father that I conceive loved me least. It may be they loved one another the better for that too. However it prove, I know not, but this I am most assured that if any of the three Brothers died without issue, my Father ever intended their Rent Charge should revert to me, and not lye still as a Clog upon my Estate, or that any Daughter of his, whom he had otherwise provided for forth of the Estate, should thus interrupt his intentions towards his Heir."

Then follows the passage already given, upon which he concludes:

"but I shall and can, I praise God, and have heretofore patiently looked upon their Peevishness and Frowardness towards me, and all their wise and prudent Councils and Synods they have held against me, as if they had been to have dealt with some Cheater and Cozener, not with a Brother who had ever carried himself justly and lovingly towards them; nor do I, or will I deny them the duties I owe unto them as recommended unto my care by my Father. Nay, as wise as they did, or do take themselves to have been, I will say it had not been the worse for them, as I think, if they had taken less of their own foolish, empty Fancies and followed more of my Advice, who, I must needs say, take myself to have been full as able to

have directed their course, as they themselves could have been at that age.”¹

The brother who seems to have chiefly shared Strafford’s life, knighted by him on his arrival in Ireland, the executor of his will, and his companion on the scaffold, was George. And since with Wentworth it was all or nothing, he seems to have admitted George’s wife to the whole-hearted affection he bestowed on her husband. Even the endorsement of the letter to “my dearest Sister Wentworth” breathes a warmth of affection unusual in more demonstrative men than “Black Tom Tyrant”.

“Dear Sister,” he writes, “I could not keep this messenger longer from bringing the news I trust of your coming to Castle Jordan and of your well-being there. You must give me leave to be solicitous after you, considering how much I esteem you, and must ever take myself to be concerned in all that belongs unto you. If I can possibly shake off the importunity of these affairs, I will see you and your little one in Whitsun week. In the mean space attend your recovery. You will be pleased to remember my service to my Lady Jephson, to Sir John Giffard and my little godson and to my fair (I trust for all this) niece. May your heart be stored and satisfied with content, and may you possess all your thoughts in peace and repose, and were there anything that could be thought better, it should be heartily wished for you, by your most affectionate, faithful brother and servant,

WENTWORTH.”²

This letter is that of a man ripened by life and its manifold experience. The young guardian, solicitous of his wards’ welfare, is, perhaps, best expressed in an epistle to an absent brother. Both are admirable, as are all Wentworth’s letters in this—the family—category. But bearing in mind the perversity inherent in human nature, the very

¹ *Letters*, vol. i. p. 484: Lord Deputy to Greenwood, November 27, 1635.

² Add. MS. 12097-f. 16: Lord Deputy to Lady Wentworth, Dublin, April 30, 1638.

excellence of the advice administered may help us to understand something of the "frowardness" of Matthew and Elizabeth.

"Beloved Brother," he writes, "That your moneys come so slowly to you I am not a little grieved, but should be much more if the fault had been in us. I assure you your moneys have been always in your merchants' hands two months at least before they were due to you, so I hope you will excuse me that shall be always as careful of you as of myself; but indeed the blame in a great part is your own, for having retired yourselves into such an obscure place as your merchants cannot possibly learn out what it is, or where to deliver you your moneys, neither do you give us any sufficient intelligence how to find the means to convey them unto you. Therefore you must speedily address your letters unto Mr. Limbray. . . . I shall from time to time contribute my advice, and I shall likewise write to Sir Henry Wotton, who I dare presume will use you with all courtesy, and friendship.

"Good Brother," continues the anxious young mentor, "have a care of your ways, and how you employ your time abroad, assuring yourself that how remote soever you be, they cannot be hid from the knowledge of the State, to your commendation if they be discreet and virtuous (as in good faith I doubt not but they are) to your blemish and disgrace if they be otherways—which God forbid—as also yourself will feel the loss of misspent time when the loss to your greatest grief is irrecoverable. I like your style in writing, it groweth methinks more masculine, practice and time will greatly perfect it; therefore I pray you let us hear from you as often as you can, and take some pains in the inditing of your letters, which will be a means to better the ability of your pen more than you shall either perceive or can imagine." Which edifying lecture is partly accounted for by the next remark that his brother's last letter to the family steward Richard Marris was "very ill writ"! If Wentworth felt it his duty to point out faults he gladly, however, recurs to praise. "I take not a little

comfort", he says, "you are so willing to have my advice in your travels, which as it shall stir me up to cast how to give you my best advice, so I trust if I add nothing to you, I shall take nothing from you.

"Your most assured and dearly affectionate brother,

"THOMAS WENTWORTH.¹

"Fetterlane, July 8, 1621."

Then follows a delightful postscript.

"You should do well to buy yourself a pretty seale for your letters, and to learn to lap them up handsomely; it would be a pretty content both to yourself and to them that shall receive them from you, and albeit it be soon learnt, yet it is a gentlemanly and graceful toy."

The elegancies of letter-writing must have remained one of Wentworth's hobbies, for many years later the Lord Deputy, the busiest of men, though "overdrudging" in Ireland, makes time to explain his very precise views on stationery to Raylton, his agent in England. His minute directions are worth quoting as an instance of his attention to detail.

"The paper which came from London is all very bad; it wearies me extremely to write upon it, this I have here is much better; you can not do me a greater pleasure then so soon as any good comes to London, to send me a good quantity of it, square cut, which is one principal point, and if there be not extraordinary care used, is never as it should be, and so becomes extreme troublesome whenever it comes to the lapping of it up. For size and cutting of it, you cannot have a better pattern than this paper on which now I write; in good faith, I am inforced to use my pen so much, as that smooth and good paper might prove, God help me, one of the greatest comforts of my life here in Ireland."²

Probably at all periods of the world the elders of the

¹ Fitzwilliam MSS.: Thomas Wentworth to a brother, July 8, 1621.

² *Idem*: Wentworth to Raylton, Dublin, May 20, 1635.

community have delighted in drawing up sapient counsels and wise rules for the direction of the young. The essential difference between the seventeenth century and our own age is that we seek to gild the pill. Directness was not regarded as an unpardonable offence when Thomas Wentworth took up his parable for the benefit of his wards—a numerous body, for besides his brothers and sisters, he was guardian to the sons of his widowed sister Lady Savile, whose husband had been one of his dearest friends. From the account which both Strafford and Radcliffe give of the labours this guardianship involved, it was certainly no sinecure. A considerable number of lawsuits affecting the Savile property were pending, which Wentworth made a point of watching. Consequently during eight years every law term saw him at Westminster. What trouble, expense, and interruption to his occupations and affairs this entailed can only be properly estimated if we remember what a journey from Yorkshire to London represented in those days. The only benefit he derived from this interpretation of his duties—for he scorned to claim “one groat” from his ward’s purse—was the legal knowledge thus obtained, which stood him in good stead throughout his subsequent career. Indeed at that period some acquaintance with legal procedure and precedents was almost indispensable for the ordinary country gentleman, and still more for the aspirant to the Privy Council.

In these circumstances, when his nephew, having attained his majority, neglected to inform him of the completion of some business which Wentworth had “so painfully endeavoured for so many years together”, he was displeased and frankly remonstrated with the youth. The protest ended, he added that he desired “to say to his own Heart” that he had not failed to deliver his opinion on the lines on which his nephew should dispose of himself and his fortune. The lecture is one for which we may be

thankful, since in giving it the Lord Deputy retraced his own past history during the precious early years of manhood, thereby enabling us to understand the self-imposed discipline which prepared the future Strafford for his career.

“I conceive”, he wrote, “you should lay aside all thoughts of going up to London these four or five years, live in your own house, order and understand your own Estate, inform and employ yourself in the affairs of the country; carry yourself respectively and kindly towards your neighbours, desire the company of such as are well governed and discreet amongst them, and make them as much as you can your friends; in Country business keeping yourself from all Faction; and at the first be not too positive or take too much upon you, till you fully understand the Course of Proceedings, for have but a little patience, and the Command and Government of that part of the Country will, infallibly, fall into your hands, with Honour to yourself, and Contentment to others; whereas, if you catch at it too soon, it will be but a means to publish your want of Understanding and Modesty, and that you shall grow cheap, and in contempt before them that see you undertake that, where you are not able to guide yourself in your own way.”

The influence Strafford possessed in his own county is good proof that these wise maxims were not second-hand platitudes tricked out in fair language, but the outcome of the writer's experience. Again, in his financial advice to Savile, we find reflected the strict exactitude he enforced in his household and estate accounts, while, at the same time, according to the much travelled Howell, the magnificence of his official establishment exceeded anything of the sort in Europe, with the single exception of the Spanish Viceroy's Court at Naples.

“Be sure”, he says, “to moderate your Expense, so as it may be without foolish waste or mean Savings, take your

own accounts and betimes inure yourself to examine how your Estate prospers, where it suffers and where it is to be improved; otherwise, there will such an Easiness and Neglect gather upon you, as it may be you will never patiently endure the Labour of it whilst you live, and so, as much as in you lies, cast from you that which tends most to the Preservation of your Fortune or any other thing; for I am persuaded few men that understood their Expense ever wasted, and few that do not, ever well-governed their Estate."

So far the economist, but the princely noble must, likewise, have his say:

"Considering that your Houses, in my Judgment, are not suitable to your quality, nor yet your Plate or Furniture, I conceive your expense ought to be reduced to two Thirds of your Estate, the rest saved to the accommodating of you in that Kind; these things provided, you may, if you see Cause, enlarge yourself the more. In these and all things else", he continues, "you shall do passing well to consult Mr. Greenwood, who hath seen much, is very well able to judge, and certainly most faithful to you. . . . If you use him not most respectfully, you deal extream ungrateful with him, and ill for yourself. For your servants use them neither so familiarly as to lose their reverence at your hands, nor so disdainfully as to purchase yourself their illwill, but carry it in an equal Temper towards them, both in Punishment and Rewards."¹

Apart from the evidence of these letters, we know from Radcliffe's memoir that Wentworth was preaching what he himself practised. Recognising, probably, that over-hasty judgements might be the penalty attending on his quick wit, in order to assist and revise his decisions he instituted a domestic tribunal, which, in its careful balance, recalls the nice adjustment of the modern Government Office. Outside or public opinion was represented by his two friends, Charles Greenwood and George Radcliffe;

¹ *Letters*, vol. i. p. 170.

the experts or Civil Service by Richard Marris, steward, and Peter Man, solicitor. Once a quarter the four men met to deliberate on the memoranda presented for their consideration by Peter Man. There was no hurrying over the items of this list. Each counsellor had his say, and each resolution was duly noted in writing, "Whereof his Lordship kept one copy, and Peter Man another".¹ At the next meeting, the plans previously sketched out were produced and compared with their performance, fresh schemes were debated and prepared. Twice a year, on the 20th of March and the 20th of September, the estate accounts were thoroughly audited, for Strafford held it was "no advantage either to the Tenant or the Landlord to suffer arrears to run longer". Thus in all his concerns, private and public, Wentworth courted the freest criticism of his true friends.

Wentworth's portrait would be incomplete if the lighter sides to his character were omitted. He loved his home with passion. But wherever he took up his abode he left it the better for his artistic sense and care. Thus when President of the North he not only added considerably to the official "lodgings", but neglected no detail to enhance its amenities. Writing from London to Richard Marris, he tells him, "this bearer in a little bag brings you a number of bay berries, which I would have set as soon as may be, sum of them upon the north side of the new little west wall, which runs west from the Gallery end at Woodhouse, to the high east walk; the rest all along the North of the wall at York, which goes from the stair forth of the drawing chamber, and divides the new gardens, which will be both pleasant and of good use—let me charge you to have a principal care herein, and that you will see them set yourself."²

¹ *Letters*, vol. ii. App. 433.

² Fitzwilliam MSS.: Wentworth to Richard Marris, Westminster, February 1, 1630.

Over and above his love of beautifying and improving his estates, houses, and gardens, Wentworth's sporting tastes formed another and a strong link in the chain which bound him to the house of his fathers. A good falconer, he prided himself on his casts, although, owing to the absence of hedgerows in Ireland to shelter game, he was reduced to letting his hawks fly at small birds. Of his hunting, Radcliffe says less. But judging from a letter to Lord Carlisle, Wentworth must have had a true Yorkshireman's devotion to the chase, since, contrary to his usual proudly humble depreciation of his own gifts, when sending "a whole kennel of hounds", five couple of which came from his own pack, he cannot resist singing the praises of the dogs to Lord Carlisle.

"Thus much in their behalf, according to the dialect of a Northern. Cracker's ancestors were of those famous Heroes that in the fields of Hanworth (in Middlesex) and Wittwange (East Riding, Yorkshire) were of the chief in scent and view, and if it came to a black hare, run dogs, horse and men clean out of sight, and the silly beast was sure to die for it before she got to the two miles end. . . . What this, their offspring, may perform upon the Alps I cannot be resolved by our huntsmen, but it is strongly supposed they will not prove Pejores Avis."¹

With respect to other amusements, high play can never have been a temptation to Wentworth. Indeed, his advice on this particular subject to his nephew exactly expresses the opinion we should anticipate:

"Spend not too much time, nor venture too much money at gaming, it is a great vanity that possesseth some men, and in most is occasioned by a greedy mind of winning, which is a pursuit not becoming a generous, noble Heart, which will not brook such starved considerations as these."²

¹ Camden MSS. vol. vii. p. 2, from Eg. MSS. 2597, f. 108: Wentworth to Lord Carlisle, December 20, 1632.

² *Letters*, vol. i. p. 170: Wentworth to Sir William Savile.

Nevertheless, he was too much a man of the world to fly in the face of custom, which made card-playing a feature of the Christmas festivities at Dublin Castle, as the *jeu du Roi* on gala nights at Versailles. Wentworth would then play, and, which is equally characteristic, if he did join in cards and primero he played "exceedingly well". But his chief recreation was if after supper he had company

"which were suitable unto him, that is, honest, cheerful men, he would retire into an inner room, and sit two or three Hours, taking Tobacco, and telling Stories with great Pleasantness and Freedom".¹

And this he used constantly with all familiarity in private, "laying then aside all State and that due Respect which in publick he would expect".

These reminiscences of Radcliffe refer mainly to the period of Wentworth's Viceroyalty, when he would have been failing in his duty if he had not exacted "due Respect" in public. Moreover, he was then a middle-aged man. In Wentworth's case, the youth was, however, father to the man in an unusual degree, and we may be sure that it was in those years from 1614 to 1621, while learning to rule not only his household, his family, and his dependents, but his own spirit, that the convictions, the habits, and the tastes were formed which went to the making of the Earl of Strafford.

¹ *Letters*, vol. ii. App. 433.

CHAPTER III

Looking back at his career, Wentworth had good reason to recommend his scheme of life to his nephew, since already by 1615 he was appointed to the office of Custos Rotulorum, or Keeper of the Archives for the West Riding. Nor was this promotion due to the fact that he had no competitors worthy the name in wealth and position in the neighbourhood. Besides his father-in-law, Lord Cumberland, at Londesborough, three men, Sir Thomas Fairfax of Denton, Sir John Savile of Howley, and Sir Arthur Ingram of Temple Newsam, all destined to play a certain part in Wentworth's career, bulked large in the public view. Wentworth was on affectionate terms with Fairfax, on cordial terms at that period with Ingram, but between him and his other powerful neighbour, Sir John Savile, relations quickly became the reverse of friendly.

When the untried young baronet took up his residence at Wentworth Woodhouse, Sir John Savile was already one of the most influential personages of the countryside. Savile had built a house described by Camden as "*aedes elegantissimae*" at Howley, in the very centre of the cloth-making district. Here, with 13,000 clothiers living in a radius of ten miles from his home, he had ample opportunities for studying their needs and grievances.¹ Moreover, he had the wit to use those opportunities, and in the Parliaments of 1607 and 1614 he was recognised as the

¹ Cartwright, *Chapters of Yorkshire History*, pp. 182-3.

expert authority to whom the House of Commons lent a willing ear. If Savile remained on the best of terms with his humble clients, his relations with his equals or superiors were not so uniformly happy. Although his methods were subterranean, his temper, naturally harsh and overbearing, could not always be controlled, and the man who did not fear a contest with Robert Cecil in Parliament was not likely to avoid disputes with his fellow-squires in Yorkshire.

In 1614 affairs reached an unpleasant climax. Sir Thomas Fairfax, who was no bad evidence, since he reserved his fire-eating propensities for active service, charged Savile with making use of his authority to satisfy his own ends. One item of the accusation was a matter of such "foul condition" in the opinion of Lord Sheffield, the Lord President of the North, that he felt it incumbent on him to refer the question of Sir John's "evil carriage" to Lord Chancellor Ellesmere.¹ Out of this inquiry Savile cannot have emerged triumphantly, since in 1615 he thought it more prudent to forestall dismissal from the office of *Custos Rotulorum* by asking the Chancellor's leave to resign the post, in order, as he piously worded his excuse, that he might "more peaceably pass this life in Expectation of a better". If Sir John anticipated that the offer to quit would bring about a revulsion in his favour, he was disappointed.

"There is nothing", ran the Chancellor's "apostille" to Savile's letter, "but his own Fault and his disorderly and passionate carriage of himself (ill becoming a man of his Place and Calling) that draws on these his Troubles, for which I am sorry. And therefore, I commend him in making this Suit, which I had rather should be done upon his own Request than otherwise."²

¹ *Letters*, vol. i. p. 2: Lord President of the North to the Lord Chancellor, February 18, 1613/14.

² *Idem*, vol. i. p. 3: Sir John Savile to Ellesmere, December 9, 1615.

It was on Wentworth that Savile's office was bestowed, and though the latter announced that the young man was appointed at his recommendation, Wentworth, at least, gave no credit to the statement, believing that Savile's intentions were not benevolent.

For close on two years matters remained quiescent. Wentworth worked hard at his new post, which carried primacy in the Commission of the Peace, while Savile may well have seemed intent on preparing himself for the better life he desiderated. Therefore, when Wentworth received a letter from Buckingham summoning him to restore his new dignities to Savile, the abrupt demand had the effect of a bolt from the blue.

"Sir," wrote Buckingham, "these are to let you understand that whereas His Majesty is informed that Sir John Savile yeilded up his Place of Custos Rotulorum voluntarily unto you, whom now His Majesty hath received into Favour again, and proposeth to imploy in his service, His Majesty will take it well at your hands, that you resign it up again unto him with the same willingness, and will be mindful of you to give you as good Preferment upon any other Occasion."

To let himself be ousted, without cavil or question, from the first rung of the ladder to success would have been a severe trial to one less ambitious and determined than Wentworth. As was to be expected, his protest was instant and forcible. After acknowledging Buckingham's missive, and briefly recapitulating its contents, Wentworth proceeds:

"My Lord, I am with all duty to receave and with all humble thankfulness to acknowledge His Majesty's great favour herein; both of his especial grace to take the consent of his humblest subject, when it might have pleased His Majesty absolutely to command, as also for soe princely a promise of other preferment, and it were indeed the

greatest good happ unto me, if I had the means whereby His Majesty would be pleased to take notice how much I esteem myself bound to his princely goodness for the same.

"Where your Lordship is informed that Sir John yielded up his place of Custos Rotulorum willingly unto me, under favour, I have no reason soe to conceive, for first, he had no interest to yield, and further, I imagine, he would not have done the same willingly at all."

Having recalled the cause of Sir John's resignation, made only to anticipate his dismissal by the Chancellor, who had then, unsolicited, conferred the post on Wentworth, a post in which he had applied himself "with all great care and sincerity to His Majesty's service", Sir Thomas added quite firmly that "he finds no willingness in himself to yield up his place to Sir John". He concluded by stating that as he had never harboured a thought that might draw Buckingham's "hard conceit" on him, he fully relied on his lordship in a matter that "so deeply concerns my credit in the county where I live".¹

Letters of remonstrance in the sequel were to receive scant notice from Buckingham. But whatever the cause, on this occasion, he was not deaf to the voice of reason. He did more; he apologised handsomely for a suggestion based, he declared, on "misinformation", and vowed that by asking Wentworth to resign the post he was assured he would be acting on the latter's wish.

"Upon these grounds, I thought, it could be neither wrong nor disgrace to move you in that Business. But I pray you believe that I am so far from doing the least indignity to any gentleman of your worth that I would be ready upon any occasion to do you the best service I could."²

In the first round with Savile, Wentworth had undoubtedly scored a victory. In 1619 he was further

¹ *Fortescue Papers*, Camden Society, p. 23: Sir Thomas Wentworth to Earl of Buckingham, September 15, 1617.

² *Letters*, vol. i. p. 4: Earl of Buckingham to Wentworth, September 23, 1617.

appointed a member of the Council of the North. Ere long, however, he was again to try another fall with the old knight, since in the election of 1620-21 he disputed the representation of the county against Sir John.

The calling together of that Parliament was a direct outcome of the wave of sympathetic Protestantism then sweeping over the country. Englishmen had followed the fortunes of the Palatine Frederick and their own English Princess with passionate interest from the moment in 1619 that he had accepted the Bohemian Crown. By an adroit mixture of threats and cajolery the Spanish Ambassador had prevented James from attempting any intervention while it might have been effectual. At the end of October 1620, after the Battle of the Black Mountain, when Frederick's situation became desperate, the King found that he could no longer resist the universal demand for a Parliament, which alone could give forcible expression to the national enthusiasm for his defeated and fugitive son-in-law—the hero of his subjects.

In this aberration—for aberration it was—Wentworth did not share. From Sir Henry Wotton, who favoured friendly relations with Catholic Powers, he had probably gained insight into their actual conditions, and he remained permanently influenced by the knowledge absorbed from his earliest mentor. If, too, as seems likely, by a passage in a letter, the young man's Grand Tour had led him to Spain, his own observations may have convinced him that England had little to dread from the most Catholic monarch. For already Spain was on the downward grade, and her only chance of recovery from the internal exhaustion that was sapping her strength was to keep clear of continental entanglements. Furthermore, the belief that England owed herself primarily to completing her own reforms, a belief that prompted and underlay all Wentworth's endeavours, was necessarily antagonistic to the

politico-religious adventure so alluring to many of his contemporaries. If he was out of sympathy with the main cause which had led to the calling together of Parliament, Wentworth was none the less eager to take his part at Westminster. Indeed, it is difficult to credit his statement that in standing for the county he did not "in truth desire it out of ambition, but rather to satisfy some of my best friends, and such as have most power over me". He was, however, perfectly sincere when he added:

"yet if the county makes choice of me, surely I will zealously perform the best service for them that my means of understanding shall enable me unto".¹

The county, as a whole, undoubtedly recognised in Wentworth the power and will to make good this pledge; and he himself felt so secure of their support that he considered it quite feasible to induce the electors on his sole recommendation also to return Sir George Calvert. At first it appeared unlikely that Savile would stand. He was, however, only biding his time as he realised that he had small chance of beating Wentworth. But he knew that if he defeated Calvert, a Secretary of State who was being brought in practically on Wentworth's shoulders, he would deal a shrewd blow to his enemy's prestige in the county, and would discount the Government's gratitude to the rising young baronet. Sir George Calvert, the future Lord Baltimore, in later life the would-be founder of Maryland, was moreover one of Wentworth's closest and most honoured friends, and he would never have forgiven himself had he allowed him to be defeated. It was therefore with double ardour that Sir Thomas flung himself into the contest.

"Sir John Savile's instruments", he told Ingram, "were closely and cunningly suggesting under hand, Mr. Secre-

¹ *Letters*, vol. i. p. 8: Wentworth to Sir Henry Bellasys, Wentworth Woodhouse, November 28, 1620.

tary's non-residence, his being the King's servant and out of these reasons by law cannot, and in good discretion, ought not to be chosen of the County, whereas himself is their martyr, having suffered for them, the Patron of the Clothiers, of all others fittest to be relied on, and that he intends to be at York the day of the election, craftily avoiding to declare himself absolutely. And thus he works."¹

Though he had begun by desiring electors to give their votes for the Secretary in the first, and to himself in the second place, Wentworth realised that for "such a toyish ceremony" he might endanger Calvert's chances. Consequently he decided that he would stand "in the Prime and cast all my second votes upon him", "as the likeliest way as far as I can judge to secure both".

Polling had been fixed, strangely enough, for Christmas day. Therefore though regretting the "discommodity" to his supporters, Wentworth begged them to come and eat a "Christmas pie" with him at York, where he had borrowed Ingram's sumptuous house, close to the Minster, a mansion described by a contemporary as "a Second Paradise", "a place so pleasant to all the senses, as nature and art can make it".

Few men have owed less to health than Wentworth. His successes were as much victories over his own sufferings as over adverse circumstances, and he was generally most ill when he had the greatest need of strength. The election of 1620 was no exception to this rule, for "a slippe on the ice on horseback" confined him to the house when his presence was most needed to combat Savile's intrigues. He made amends for the lack of a personal canvass, however, by an admirable series of letters, begging the aid of his neighbours, great and small, at the poll. Some of his other methods, it must be admitted, would not pass the scrutiny

¹ *Letters*, vol. i. p. 11: Wentworth to Sir A. Ingram, December 6, 1620.

of an Election Committee to-day; whilst it will be seen that others did not even then find favour at Westminster, and, indeed, one in particular devised by Lord Darcy and Wentworth very nearly risked the latter's success. They begged the High Constable to obtain from the Petty Constables a list of those freeholders within their townships who intended to travel to York to cast their votes for either candidate.

"So as we may keep the note", as Wentworth courteously phrased his request, "as a testimony of their good affections, and know whom we are beholden to, desiring them further to go along with us to York on Sunday, being Xmas Eve, or else meet us at two of the clock at Tadcaster."¹

Wentworth's appeal met with a cordial response. He was escorted into York by a large contingent of his supporters, and Christmas Day saw the "old gallant of Howley" at the bottom of the poll.

Thus far, all had gone as merrily for Wentworth as the Yuletide bells which rang him in; but he had to pay a heavy reckoning for his victory.

At the meeting of Parliament, Sir John Savile presented a petition against Wentworth's return, the letters desiring the Petty Constables to furnish lists of the electors being represented as deliberate attempts to tamper with the liberty of electors. The House was further informed that the constables had been instructed to acquaint Wentworth with the names of those who refused to vote for him, a proceeding certain speakers denounced as an overt menace, when the man in question, like Wentworth, was powerful in his own county. In particular, Mr. Mallory, the member for Ripon, declared that he was an eye-witness of the intimidation practised by certain constables,

¹ *Letters*, vol. i. p. 13: Sir T. Wentworth, December 8, 1620.

who had taken upon themselves forcibly to exclude freeholders shouting for "a Savile".¹ A committee was appointed to adjudicate on the matter and, for the moment, the wrongs of the Palatine and the crimes of monopolists were forgotten in the Commons' anxiety to vindicate freedom of election. In fact, the room where the committee met became so crowded that complaints were made of the difficulty to secure a proper hearing for the several parties. When the charges were sifted, as usual, gross exaggerations were detected. The High Sheriff, Sir Thomas Gower, and the Constables Bartin Allcott and Richard Micklethwaite, who, poor men, had been dragged up from Yorkshire to be cross-examined, were accused of having placed guards armed with halberts at the door of the poll, to prevent "about a thousand persons crying 'a Savile' from registering their votes."² Indeed, it was asserted that a member of the band had his head broken while striving to pierce the ring. A different complexion, however, was put on the incident when it transpired that, the polling-booths being situated at the gaol, the authorities, considering the prevailing disorder, had thought it necessary to guard, not against the entry of electors, but against the exit of prisoners. The accusation that Wentworth intended any threats was also disposed of by the evidence of the constables. They swore that the wording of the missives was their own, and was not unusual, they having merely sought to give expression to Wentworth's hope that if the freeholders regarded himself and Calvert as suitable candidates, they would give their votes in their favour. A letter from Wentworth, out of which one Attorney Johnson had made much mischief, when produced, also fell rather flat. Addressed to Constable Stanhope, it contained a polite entreaty for the names of the electors friendly to his return

¹ *Chapters of Yorkshire History*, p. 209.

² *Idem*, p. 210.

that he might possess a testimony of their good affections, and know to whom he was beholden.¹

The verdict of the committee was consequently in Wentworth's favour, though, owing doubtless to the large following commanded by the "old gallant of Howley", the majority was narrow. Various causes contributed to this result. A conservative-minded section owed Wentworth a grudge for ousting an old and distinguished member like Sir John, while the Opposition were furious at his having made a present to the Ministry of a seat which they had regarded as secured to their interests in the person of Savile. Noye, then as closely affiliated to the Opposition as he was eventually to the other side, gave, perhaps, the fullest expression to the anger which possessed his party. Having remarked that Sir Thomas Wentworth "went too far" when he desired to have a memorandum of the freeholders who refused to vote for him, "for this was but to fear them with a Reminiscar", he proceeded to give an illustration of a "Reminiscar" which can scarcely have been to Wentworth's taste.

"The Lord Bruce of Bremeor", he informed the committee, "having a judgment given against him by the Barons of the Exchequer, said to the Chief Baron as he was going out of Court: 'Reminiscar', and that for this the King and Council having heard the Cause, did judge the Lord Bruce to walk round about Westminster Hall in his doublet and hose without a Cloak, Hat or Sword."²

Though partisans like Noye could not obtain the satisfaction of seeing the proudest of their number thus doing penance in Westminster Hall, the unfortunate constables did not escape scot-free, but after the manner of the world paid for their principal. Feeling, indeed, ran so high that one

¹ *Chapters of Yorkshire History*, p. 211.

² *Proceedings and Debates of the House of Commons*, collected by a member of the House, Oxford, 1766, vol. i. pp. 216-17, March 23, 1621.

speaker actually suggested that they should be sent to the Tower. Even in that excited assembly such a proposal was, however, regarded as excessive. Stanhope was finally let off with a small fine. Allcott and Micklethwaite, on their knees at the Bar, were soundly rated by the Speaker for presuming to "meddle with what belonged not to them, for undue preparation for warrants of command to petty constables, and for menaces, by requiring the names of refusers to be delivered".¹ They were then allowed to depart.

Wentworth was never inclined to shelter himself behind any mortal man, least of all behind his inferiors. At his trial he told the prosecution plainly that rather than allow his witnesses to be bullied he would dispense with their evidence. If this was the case when he was fighting for his life, it may readily be believed that he was not now to be frightened into a meek acquiescence with the House's somewhat illogical judgement. He argued that Savile's accusations were levelled at himself alone, and that he being acquitted, Sir John should be called in question for his charges. This characteristic challenge found no favour with the Commons. Wentworth, indeed, they confirmed in the tenure of his seat, but they added the rider that Savile had vindicated freedom of election. Content Wentworth was not, yet even his masterful spirit could not struggle further.

In the six weeks that elapsed between the meeting of Parliament on February 5 and the final adjudication on Savile's petition on March 23, a considerable amount of business was initiated. Much as domestic reforms were needed, and were acknowledged to be needed, precedence was unhesitatingly accorded to religious questions.

Little as Wentworth shared the politico-religious views of the majority of his fellow-members, he backed one bill

¹ *Chapters of Yorkshire History*, p. 212.

for the better observance of the Sabbath, which is interesting, as it affords the first instance of co-operation between him and John Pym, the latter of whom fathered the measure.

At this early period the good temper of the House was so marked that had James taken them into his confidence he should have had little trouble to obtain adequate supplies. If the members had understood the magnitude of the sacrifice required it might have brought them either to pause or to gird themselves in earnest for their Jihad. Since, however, no details were vouchsafed as to the methods of assisting the Palatine, or the cost of assistance, they were unusually generous in voting two subsidies.

Unlike excursions into continental affairs, the question of monopolies, which also occupied the attention of the House, was bound to interest Wentworth. It might have caused trouble between the King and the Commons if James had not been persuaded to abandon Mompesson and Michell, the Patentees, as the holders of these obnoxious patents were termed, to their mercy. Wentworth's attitude in the controversy shows that his commercial policy in Ireland was the natural evolution from convictions formed at this, an early stage of his career. He was never in favour of monopolies, though, like most of the economists of that period, he was prepared to take very stringent measures to protect nascent industries; if, theoretically, he might have agreed with Bacon's defence of certain patents, he regarded their practical consequences, as exploited by greedy countries, as indefensible. When a bill for "free liberty of buying and selling wools" was introduced, he had no hesitation in attributing the decline of the cloth trade equally to the patent held by a certain Alderman Coquin for dyeing and dressing clothes, and to the pretermitted custom, a criticism that probably found favour with his clothier constituents.

Throughout the various debates it is remarkable that on the infrequent occasions when Wentworth spoke he generally urged compromise or attempted to restrain the extremists and to bring the House back to a strictly practical point of view. A douche of common sense was sorely needed at times, but it was not popular.

Again, when James, growing nervous that the House might interfere with his cherished project of a marriage between his heir and the Spanish Infanta, sent word that the House would be adjourned in four days, Wentworth urged the Commons to cease lamenting, to risk being adjourned instead of prorogued, and to apply themselves to rush through the half-finished bills. Let us "send to the Lords", he said, "to desire their lordships to pass those bills they have in their hands with speed that we may do as much as lieth in our Power to satisfy the People, who have paid their money".¹ His arguments did not convince his audience. They feared an adjournment more than the loss of their half-discussed measures. Accordingly, on June 4, Parliament was prorogued; the Commons, at the last moment, passing an enthusiastic resolution to venture their lives and estate for the maintenance of God's cause and His Majesty's royal issue, should the King's negotiations fail for the recovery of the Palatinate. Even James's mistrustful soul was not proof against so signal a proof of loyalty. He showed himself grateful by having the declaration translated that foreigners might appreciate his subjects' spirit. The good impression this act created was, however, destroyed by his folly in committing Sir Edwin Sandys and Selden to prison. He suspected them of treating directly with the Palatine, but the world in general decided they were punished—Sandys for words spoken in the House, Selden for a legal opinion on Parliamentary jurisdiction.

¹ Gardiner, vol. iv. p. 129.

Consequently, when the House met again and Government pressed for supplies for the defence of the Palatinate, members no longer showed themselves so amenable to these demands. The confinement of their fellow-members could not pass unchallenged; and except Wentworth, few independent members gave much credit to Calvert's assurances that Sandys had not been punished for his utterances at Westminster.

Probably owing to his relations with Calvert, Wentworth was better informed; and his opposition to an inquiry into the supposed breach of privilege was doubtless due to his anxiety to avoid a struggle which would have been singularly inopportune. Thanks mainly to Calvert's tact, this storm was finally allayed, though the domestic reforms on which Wentworth had set his heart did not progress. The Palatinate was the question of the hour, and overshadowed everything. But when it came to finding money, the Commons refused to vote sufficient properly to finance the campaign. They were thoroughly suspicious of James, who refused to give them any information. They saw the Spanish ambassador prompting their Sovereign's speeches and controlling his actions. They realised that it was his ambition to marry his son and heir to the granddaughter of Philip II., and as Englishmen and Protestants they had good cause for displeasure and alarm. Consequently, Calvert only succeeded in obtaining a fourth of the sum required for military operations.

Wentworth, better acquainted with the actual conditions of the case, did not see eye to eye with his fellow-members. From his old friend Wotton, who had spent miserable months wrestling vainly with Dutchmen, Germans, and other parties to the quarrel, he may well have gained some insight into its origin; while Calvert probably made no mystery of its latest developments to the young member to whom he owed his seat. As has been said, in his eyes

the Most Catholic Monarch was not the bogey that he appeared to the majority.

But though he had, on the whole, supported the Government and pleaded for compromise and conciliation, as time went by he felt the necessity for making a stand on the vital principle of liberty of speech for Parliament. It was on his proposal that a protest on the subject to be entered on their journals was drawn up. That it might merely be a profession of faith, honourable to themselves, but fruitless of present effect, was clearly apparent. James's communications had been increasingly irritating, increasingly offensive. The climax was reached when he practically offered to let them off the subsidy if they would abandon the business they had in hand and devote their energies to the bills remaining over from the previous session.¹ They must have realised then, if they did not know it before, that their short day of power, if power it could be called, was numbered. They must also have realised that, if they gave way, the Palatinate might yet be saved, though at the cost of English liberties. The choice was vital, but they did not hesitate, neither did Wentworth, though even then, at the eleventh hour, he prefaced his declaration with words that should have reassured the suspicious monarch and convinced him that the care of their rights concealed no invidious attack by the Commons on his cherished prerogatives.

"Sir Thomas Wentworth", runs the brief report, "would not have a debate at this time of the Rights and Privileges which the House hath to debate of matter of War and the marriage of the Prince, because we did in our former Petition decline the further meddling therein, but would have us stand on it that our Privileges are our Right and Inheritance, and that it is at our Election to go on with Bills or other business."²

¹ Gardiner, vol. iv. pp. 260-61.

² *Debates*, vol. ii. p. 356, December 18, 1621.

The same day that Wentworth delivered himself of this address, the Commons trooped into the House to put on record, almost in Wentworth's words, their conviction that the liberties and franchises of Parliament were the "undoubted Rights and inheritance" of the English people. It was a great turning-point in Parliamentary history, and the calm dignity of the Assembly at such a crisis must have been grateful to Wentworth's fastidious mind. The next day Parliament was adjourned until February. Few of those present can have entertained much hope of meeting again at Westminster at that date. But if any such optimists there were, they were speedily disillusioned. On December 30, James sent for the Journals of the House, and with his own hands tore out the page which held the Protest. He had not waited so long to show his regard of the Commons' undoubted "rights and inheritance". Coke and Phelips were already in the Tower. Pym was confined to his London House. On January 6, Parliament was dissolved. Wentworth's reflections were not cheerful.

"As for the disaster fallen upon this so hopeful a Parliament, albeit I should take pleasure to relate it, yet the inclosed Proclamation for Dissolution might well save me the Labour, much more then, when I cannot think a Thought of it but with Grief, will it well become me to be silent."¹

¹ *Letters*, vol. i. p. 15: Wentworth to Lord Darcy, Austin Friars, January 9, 1621/22.

CHAPTER IV

THE winter of 1622 was unhealthy. It was on that account that Pym obtained permission to leave London for his home in Somersetshire. During the early spring Wentworth, who with his household was living at Austin Friars, fell a victim to the prevalent fever. It was not until July that he was sufficiently recovered to move to Stratford-upon-Avon for "fresher air", where, however, misfortune still pursued him, since, in her turn, Lady Margaret sickened and died. The marriage, though unblessed by children, seems to have been happy, and Lady Margaret's husband always remained on excellent terms with the Clifford family. After her death Wentworth drew up a relation of her illness, which shows how great a part religion played in both their lives.¹ Lady Margaret evidently early gave herself up for lost. She sought comfort—a pathetic touch—in a devotional treatise "on avoidance of impatience in sickness", and sang, "very weakly", says Wentworth, the 84th Psalm. As her illness increased, growing nervous, she told her husband that she "had a suit to make him", the request being to send her coach and horses to fetch a clergyman, Mr. Marbonisser, to administer the Holy Communion. The request granted, she remarked that she had a second suit to make, which was that he would receive with her. To which he replied, "that I would have

¹ Fitzwilliam MSS.: "A true relation of the sickness and blessed departure of ye most virtuours and sanctified Lady Margaret Wentworth, eldest daughter to Francis, Earl of Cumberland. Collected by Thomas Wentworth, her late husband, who holds himself always bound to reverence her happy memory."

proposed myself"—with which she was very well contented. She then lay quietly reading her Book of Common Prayer until the arrival of the minister. She confessed her sins, repenting chiefly of "too much pride in her youth, and not sufficient observance of the Lord's Day" and later, though unable to recognise her husband, her last breath was spent in repeating after him a short prayer which he offered up by her bedside. The title Wentworth gave to these memories shows how deeply in truth he honoured Lady Margaret's "happy memory". After his wife's death he retreated to Wentworth Woodhouse, where in the spring of 1623 he again fell seriously ill, this time of "a double Tertian", says Radcliffe, "and after his recovery a relapse into a simple Tertian, and a while after a burning fever", those maladies, the recurrent scourge of our forefathers' ill-drained mansions, dreadful to contemplate without the help of our modern remedies. If Wentworth could not invoke the aid of our modern pharmacopœia, he shared, however, our belief in the efficacy of fresh air, as a letter, written to Sir Edward Calvert at this time, testifies.¹

"Matter worthy of your Trouble", writes the recluse of Wentworth Woodhouse, "these parts afford none, where our Objects and Thoughts are limited in looking upon a Tulip, hearing a Bird sing, a Rivulet murmuring or some such petty yet innocent pastime, which for my part I begin to feed myself in, having, I praise God, recovered more in a Day by an open Country air than in a fortnight's time in that smothering one of London. By my Troth, I wish you devested of the importunity of Business here for half a dozen hours, you should taste how free and fresh we breathe and how 'procul metu fruimur modestis opibus', a wanting sometimes to Persons of Greater Eminency in the Administration of Commonwealths."

It would have been strange if "petty though innocent

¹ *Letters*, vol. i. p. 16: Wentworth to Sir Edward Calvert, Wentworth Woodhouse, April 28, 1623.

pastimes" could have absorbed Wentworth's attention to the exclusion of his friends and family, since in the "importunity of business" he never grudged them time or trouble. Indeed, at this very period, when he was somewhat consciously preening himself on his idleness, he was busied in obtaining a commission in Conway's volunteer regiment for his brother Michael. That Wentworth's relations with the Government were still friendly is proved by the fact that he addressed his application on behalf of his "freshwater soldier" to the Colonel's father, Sir E. Conway, the Principal Secretary of State, and it is interesting to note that it is from now onwards that Christopher Wandesford and his domestic concerns begin to bulk large in Wentworth's correspondence.¹ Probably the bonds of friendship between the two kinsmen had been drawn closer during the last session of Parliament, though Wandesford's character and qualities would have been almost certain to create affinities between him and Wentworth. Their breeding and education had indeed been somewhat similar. Of a good Yorkshire stock, Wandesford had studied at Cambridge and Gray's Inn before he succeeded at an unusually early age to his paternal inheritance of Kirklington. But here the resemblance ended, for, unlike the owner of Wentworth Woodhouse, Christopher Wandesford found his moderate estate so burdened by debts and mortgages that it required considerable self-control and economy on his part to clear the property of encumbrances. He was, however, already in a position to help Wentworth during the elections of 1621, when he himself was returned for Aldeburgh; his alliance, through his wife, with the Osbornes doubtless contributing to his influence in his native county. Wandesford's proclivities in matters temporal and ecclesiastical must have made him

¹ *Letters*, vol. i. pp. 16-17: Wentworth to Sir Edward Conway, Wentworth Woodhouse, June 16, 1623.



By Sir Anthony Vandyke

THOMAS WENTWORTH, EARL OF STRAFFORD

(From the collection of His Grace the Duke of Portland at Welbeck Abbey)

specially receptive of Wentworth's maxims of Government in Church and State. The words Christopher Wandesford murmured on his deathbed, "if the poor man's cause be right he should not suffer for his poverty, nor the rich gain for being soe if his cause were bad",¹ words reflecting the spirit of his judicial administration, were in absolute accordance with Wentworth's passion "for justice, for justice itself". Again, his deep piety—thrice a day did he summon his family to prayers—was of that ordered pattern which commended itself to Churchmen of Wentworth's type. To this foundation of a common upbringing and a common faith was added the potent, though indefinable, bond of mutual attraction. The dark, masterful man, who confronts us almost menacingly on the canvas of Vandyke, had inspired his younger kinsman, whose fair skin, delicate oval face, and auburn hair must have made him, in comparison, appear even younger than he was, with a devoted affection. When Wandesford left the Yorkshire home he had employed himself in beautifying to follow Wentworth to Ireland, he could assure his son that it was "my affection for my Lord Deputy purposing to attend upon his Lordship as near as I could in all fortunes, carried me along with him wheresoever he went, and no premeditated thoughts of ambition".² That he spoke the truth was proved by the fact that the news of Strafford's impeachment proved his death-blow. His affection was amply returned. The news of his death reached Strafford in the Tower. It was scarcely a season for compliments. But Wandesford's faithful heart would have desired no other epitaph than the words wrung from his sorrowful master.

"Since I left Ireland", Strafford said, "I have passed through all sorts of afflictions . . . but indeed the loss of

¹ *Autobiography of Mrs. Alice Thornton*, Surtees Society, pp. 4-5.

² *Idem*, Preface vi-vii.

my excellent friend, the Lord Deputy, more afflicts me than all the rest."¹

In the year 1623, however, the world held only fair promise for the kinsmen. Wentworth had known sickness and bereavement. But he was young, rich, and dowered with those ambitions which lend zest to every breath that is drawn, and he was at leisure to rejoice whole-heartedly with his friend when a son came to gladden the house of Christopher Wandesford.

"The good news of the birth of your young boy", he wrote, "I may say truly was the best welcome that ever you writ me, and yet I have received many from you which have pleased me right well. I can therefore do no less than as one that unfeignedly loves you and your House, join in my prayers to Almighty God for his goodness towards you, and with my prayers that he would multiply his Graces upon you and your Posterity, wherein no friend you have in the World shall joy more than myself. So soon as I come to London, one of my first visits, God willing, shall be to see the young gentleman and his virtuous Mother to whom I wish in the meantime the increase of perfect, constant Good Health; and in this interim you will do me the Favour to present the Service of her glad-some gossip, and let her know in assurance never man was more willing or proud of being Godfather, which I shall ever esteem as a great honour and favour she hath done me in admitting me to that office, and joining me with so noble a Friend as Mr. Secretary. This House contains not any which partake not with you in the Great Comfort God hath sent you, if there were any and I knew them, I would not judge them worth to stay or harbour within my Doors."²

The two years Sir Thomas spent at Wentworth Woodhouse were memorable in England for the devising, the

¹ *Letters*, vol. ii. p. 414: Strafford to Sir Adam Loftus, December 20, 1640.

² *Idem*, vol. i. p. 17: Wentworth to Christopher Wandesford, Wentworth Woodhouse, October 2, 1623.

conclusion, and the breaking of the Spanish match. When the *ambassadeurs d'amour* returned from Madrid, and Buckingham, with the same vehemence that he had formerly advocated the marriage alliance, now urged a war with Spain on the reluctant king, it became evident that Parliament must be summoned. In Yorkshire the war-fever was less acute than in the southern counties, where the traditional hatred of Spain was still vigorous.¹ But in the whole of Yorkshire few men could have been found less willing than Wentworth to risk the growing prosperity of the country, and to defer much-needed reforms for the sake of a semi-religious, semi-buccaneering campaign. Perhaps it was the knowledge that he was out of touch with the prevailing spirit that made him less eager to re-enter the parliamentary lists. Perhaps it was the want of appreciation which the Government had shown of his attempts to save them, but it is certain that he prepared himself for the fray without any great enthusiasm. On this occasion, moreover, his own county had played him false. Yorkshire had chosen Sir John Savile as her representative, which must have been a bitter blow to Wentworth, who was obliged to fall back on the borough of Pontefract. Something of his actual sentiments transpires in a letter written at this period to his brother-in-law, Lord Clifford.

"For my opinion of these meetings your Lordship knows sufficiently," he told Lord Clifford, "and the services done there coldly requited on all sides, and, what is worse, many Times misconstrued. I judge further the Path we are like to walk in is now more narrow and slippery than formerly, yet not so difficult, but may be passed with Circumspection, Patience, and principally Silence. The town of Pontefract", he continues, "(notwithstanding all Labour made against me) hath returned myself and Sir Henry Holcroft their Burgesses, so as I see it is my

¹ Gardiner, vol. v. p. 341.

Fortune to be of the House, albeit upon the reading of your Lordship's last Letter I was much doubtful I should have been turned to Grass here in the County."¹

So it came to pass, "Circumspection, Patience, and above all Silence" were the keynotes to Wentworth's attitude in the Parliament which met on February 19, 1624. That terrible pestilence, the war fever, had got the majority of the nation and almost the entire House of Commons in its grip, and the pacific James, who could be adamant against the popular sentiment, was hard put to it to withstand the domestic pressure now brought to bear upon him. At a later period Wentworth spoke of James as having graciously accepted and openly acknowledged his faithful services, and apparently it was during these months, when the Sovereign was fighting a losing battle with Charles and Buckingham, that Wentworth was brought into contact with the old king.² Apart from his dislike to the war, Wentworth's sympathies were also bound to be with Bristol and Lionel Cranfield, Lord Middlesex, the victims to the favourite's intolerance of criticism. The slipshod finance and fantastic diplomacy Buckingham was to substitute for the saner methods pursued by both these distinguished men were naturally abhorrent to Wentworth. In fact, the prospect was not a pleasing one to the new member for Pontefract.

"I see", he told Sir Gervase Clifton, "all things go on towards an absolute breach with Spain, yet with so many letts and such slowness as argue an averseness in His Majesty to these hot proceedings, which undoubtedly he will, when he spies his Time, make appear to some men's cost, whomsoever it fall upon. I conceive the inwardness of the Prince and the Duke is as great and firm as ever, which there will be a great and artificial Endeavour to

¹ *Letters*, vol. i. p. 19: Wentworth to Lord Clifford, Wentworth Woodhouse, January 23, 1623/24.

² *Idem*, vol. i. p. 35: Sir Thomas Wentworth to Sir R. Weston.

untie. However this prove, I think my Lords of Middlesex and Bristol are likely to suffer before that Mine take.”¹

To Wandesford, who had become closely associated with the Opposition, serving doubtless as an intermediary between that party and his kinsman, Wentworth was even more outspoken. In writing to so devoted a friend he could give full play to the irony which clamorous popular opinion and the ways of courtiers ever called forth in him.

“My Lord of Buckingham returned to Court yesternight much discoloured and lean with sickness, the Dearness betwixt the Prince and him still continuing, and outwardly all continuing very serene towards him, yea, not so much as York House (Buckingham’s new mansion) but goes on passing fast, another Corner symetrical now appearing answerable to that other raised before you went hence, besides a goodly Statue of Stone set up in the Garden before the new building, bigger than the Life, of Sampson with a Philistine betwixt his legs, knocking his Brains out with the Jawbone of an Ass: the moral and means whereof may be yourself standing at the Bar, and there with all your weighty, curiously spun Arguments beaten down by some such silly instrument as that, and so the bill in Conclusion passed, Sir, in spite of your Nose.”²

So much for the wisdom of Parliaments and Parliamentarians, no less in the year 1624 than in 1640, as viewed by Wentworth.

“Thus”, he continues, “you have an account from that Face which looks inward, yet to make it good that there are some Januses with two Faces even in these days, be pleased to hear that other mouth which speaks outward”, or, in plain English, the mouth of the silly, infatuated

¹ *Letters*, vol. i. p. 20: Wentworth to Sir Gervase Clifton, Fetter Lane, June 5, 1624.

² *Idem*, vol. i. p. 21: Sir Thomas Wentworth to Christopher Wandesford, Fetter Lane, June 17, 1624.

multitude. Then having described how the Spanish Ambassador, the Marquis of Iniosa, after vainly soliciting, during Buckingham's absence, a private audience with the King, in anger at the refusal, had begged for a "Ship to waft him over", a request, Wentworth continues,

"which is benignly assented to, and Coaches appointed to boot for his convoy to Dover, his Excellence paying for their hire, so as to the great Joy and Exaltation of all the *Coblers and other Bigots and Zealous Brethren of this Town*, he this day comes to Ely House, and to-morrow towards Dover".

When Iniosa left town Parliament was no longer sitting, having already been prorogued in order to leave the field clear for the French matrimonial negotiations. The alliance between Buckingham and the Commons, begotten of their common desire to make war on Spain, had resulted in the royal assent being given to a whole batch of useful domestic bills and the vote of £300,000 by the Commons for the war. The preamble of the Subsidy Bill, however, which limited expenditure to defensive measures and the assistance of allies, practically excluded the recovery of the Palatinate, which to James seemed the only reasonable object of hostilities, while Spain was the sole target for the Commons. "Are we poor," cried Sir John Eliot, "Spain is rich. These are our Indies. Break with them; we shall break our necessities together." Where the difference of objective was so great, difference of opinion was bound to ensue. For the moment, however, the essential division between Sovereign and subjects was masked by the alliance between the Heir to the Throne and the Commons. Wentworth disagreed with both, but true to his system of "patience and silence" he quietly betook himself to Wentworth Woodhouse, where, judging from the letters he indited to Calvert, he seems to have been happy enough in the county he so dearly loved.

“Your country Servants may with more boldness, with less Prejudice to your Hours address themselves unto you, as now in that part to be esteemed one of us. I say in Part, being but like our Pond Fish here, come out of those deep Muds awhile into our shallow hungry Sands to Scour and cleanse away the corrupt Humours had by over Fulness, thereby setting an Edge upon your Appetite, and so to return again unto those wonted troubled fat Waters. Believe it, we may not admit you yet a Countryman throughout, your neighbours of Thistleworth may tell you one Summer is too little to purge away the Leaven of a Courtier; it is Time that must approve.

Fitque color primo turbati fluminis imbre,
Purgaturque morâ:

“We must have more Trial, more experience than so: first *initiat*us, and then *adult*us, lest you might come to spy out our Liberty rather than to keep our Counsel, and enjoy the contentment and Freedom of our Life with Peace and Quietness.

“But lest my over-boldness might raise in you a Belief that I take you to be altogether become a Country man, I will here fetch a Compass, and in discharge of a mutual Obligation and Courtesy to one that desires to be reckoned one of our brotherhood, write you news from the Court at Rufford, where the loss of a Stag, and the Hounds hunting Foxes instead of Deer, put the King, your master, into a marvellous Chaff, accompanied with those ordinary Symptoms better known to you Courtiers, I conceive, than to us Rural Swains: in the Height whereof comes a Clown galloping in, and Staring full in his Face, ‘His blood’ (quoth he), ‘and I come forty miles to see a Fellow’, and presently in a great Rage turns about his horse and away he goes faster than he came. The oddness whereof caused His Majesty and all the Company to burst out into a vehement Laughter, and so the fume for that Time, was happily dispersed.”¹

¹ *Letters*, vol. i. p. 23: Sir Thomas Wentworth to Sir George Calvert, Wentworth Woodhouse, August 14, 1624.

Wentworth's "harmless retirements" proved longer than he anticipated, since Parliament was prorogued to February. The delay was occasioned by the difficulties Buckingham encountered with James, who was reluctant to grant to France the concessions for English Catholics which Spain might have secured as the price of the Infanta's hand and dowry. This new and, as yet, unknown development would certainly not have endeared Buckingham's policy to Wentworth. Although he had nothing of the Puritan's abhorrence for the Roman Catholic *per se*, his strong belief in the unity of thought and aim which should exist in the ideal Commonwealth made him opposed to concessions which might well encourage the continuance of such hateful segregations in the body politic and spiritual. For Wentworth, it should be remembered, never despaired of reconciling the ideal and the practical. Moreover, idealism apart, common sense suggested that the country would resent its internal policy being dictated by France, no less than by Spain, and might well consider itself hounded by its rulers. When, however, the prorogation of Parliament was announced, Wentworth, who had never been anxious to throw away English money on foreign adventures, did not repine. On the contrary, he hoped that it might effect an economy.

"Now", he told Calvert, "that you have given us a put off till February, we are at good Ease and Leisure to pry (the true effects of Want of Employment) saucily out of our calling into the mysteries of State: to cast about for a reason of this sudden change. In a word, we conclude that the French Treaty must first be consummate before such unruly Fellows meet in Parliament, lest they might appear as agile against this as that other Spanish Match. For my part I like it well and conceive the Bargain wholesome on our Side that we save three other subsidies or Fifteenths. . . . You think we see nothing: But believe it", he concluded, "you shall find us Legislators no Fools,

albeit you of the Court think to blur our Eyes with your Sweet Balls.”¹

Before he left London for his “Tusculum”, Wentworth, whether drawn thither by Wandesford or not, had frequented Opposition circles, and in especial the house of Lord Clare, the first Earl of that name, whose second son, Denzil Holles, was to take so strenuous a part in the stormy debate of 1628. The intimacy with Denzil led in due time to an acquaintance with the young member’s sister, Lady Arabella Holles, and the acquaintance ripened into the love of Wentworth’s life. So devoted was he that during the first three years of marriage he scarcely left her for more than a couple of days at a time. Of the lady herself we know little, but the affection she won in York, “the whole city”, at her death, “wearing a face of mourning”, while “never was any woman so magnified and lamented even of those that never saw her face”, goes far to explain Strafford’s undying devotion to the memory of his “Saint in Heaven”.² The marriage was celebrated on February 24, 1625.

The “tying of Royal Love Knots” proved an even lengthier business than the King’s ministers or the impatient Prince had anticipated. In January Parliament was again prorogued, never, as it happened, to meet again during James’s lifetime, since on March 27 he died. His death made it necessary to summon a new Parliament, and, on this occasion, Wentworth determined once more to make a bid for the “Prime” representation of the County. That his opponents should again be the Saviles, father and son, probably added to his zest in the struggle, while he must have been equally satisfied at obtaining so popular a personage as Sir Thomas Fairfax for his colleague. The latter

¹ *Letters*, vol. i. p. 24: Sir Thomas Wentworth to Sir George Calvert, Wentworth Woodhouse, October 12, 1624.

² *Fairfax Correspondence*, vol. i. p. 237: Ferdinando Fairfax to first Lord Fairfax, October 8, 1631.

seems to have had as little liking for the electioneering methods of the Saviles as Wentworth himself. He complained to Lord Scrope, President of the North, of the scandalous and seducing reports set about of religion lying at stake, which were sure to affect Savile's good neighbours, the clothiers and weavers, and would prove hard to contradict at the election when "shouts, not reason must be heard".¹

The cry of "Protestantism in danger" was evidently the Savile rallying cry, and the more likely to succeed since Wentworth had never aided or abetted the war party. The "emulation in the country for the choice"² was great, Sir John Eliot says, and the concourse of voters at York unusually large. Finally, in the midst of something closely resembling a free fight, the Sheriff closed the proceedings, and declared Sir Thomas Wentworth and Fairfax to be duly elected. Considering the circumstances at the poll, it is not surprising that one of the first questions the House of Commons was called upon to decide was the petition against the two members' return, presented by Sir John Savile.

Parliament met on June 1, and it was scarcely a happy omen for the new reign that the Plague then raging in London made the wisdom of the meeting dubious. The young King's speech was appreciated, if only for its brevity. But as neither he nor his ministers troubled themselves to enlighten the House, either with regard to the moneys required, or the policy to be pursued, the Commons not unnaturally began to consider whether it would not be well to defer the discussion of business until a time when they could meet without danger. Indeed, even so ardent a debater as Sir Robert Phelips moved for an adjournment on account of the prevalent sickness, a

¹ Cartwright, *Chapters of Yorkshire History*, p. 215.

² *Negotium posterorum*, by Sir John Eliot, privately printed, 1881, vol. i. p. 95.

motion in which he was seconded by Wentworth. The motion was, however, negatived, and on the following day, June 22, Sir George Moore, the member for Surrey, on behalf of the Committee of Privileges, reported the Saviles' petition, subscribed by 1450 persons, which charged the Sheriff of Yorkshire, Sir Richard Cholmondeley, with having given a false return in favour of Wentworth and Fairfax.¹ The petition set forth that Cholmondeley, who was "wholly Wentworth's, interrupted the poll as soon as he saw it would go against his candidate, and declared Sir Thomas returned". In reply, Wentworth denied the allegation: though, with the shrewdness that in his most warlike moods seldom deserted him, he entrenched himself further behind the undeniable proposition that, even if true, these accusations concerned the Sheriff rather than he himself. Sir Richard Cholmondeley was accordingly summoned, and a fortnight later presented himself at Westminster. He then explained that if he had hesitated to grant a poll, it was because he believed the legal hour was past.² Nevertheless, he had eventually yielded to the request, though, as he held only those freeholders qualified to record their vote who had been present at the reading of the writ, he arranged that these alone should be admitted into the Castle Yard, exit being solely through a postern gate, where polling-clerks were stationed. The latter could be depended on not to allow the same electors to present themselves afresh under new names in order to create confusion. By then, however, the Savile faction had got far beyond the lying pamphlets which, at an earlier stage, had seemed so reprehensible to that stout old soldier Sir Thomas Fairfax. As the Saviles well understood, primitive methods alone offered them a chance of success. Accordingly, Sir John first got rid of an embarrassing

¹ *Commons Debates*, 1625, p. 25.

² Cartwright, *Chapters of Yorkshire History*, p. 222.

number of Wentworth's supporters by starting a report that the poll would last several days. Then, in a compact body, his partisans hurled themselves on the foregate, which they burst open, and rushed all other barriers, to be met in the very moment of victory by the outraged Sheriff's announcement that their opponents had won the day. The miracle is that the Castle Yard was not strewn with corpses, for, as Sir Richard Beaumont resentfully remarked, the whole affair was "more like a rebellion than an election".¹

After the Sheriff's examination was concluded, a motion was made to allow time for summoning other witnesses; a motion which Sir John Eliot succeeded in defeating, carrying the Committee with him against this proposal by twenty-five to seventeen votes. Throughout the episode, indeed, Eliot championed the opposition to Wentworth's return. He said, writing long after the event, that he considered "protraction would be a further injurie to the House", which had already expended much precious time on the quarrel.² Doubtless he was entitled to hold this view, though probably an instinctive antagonism may well have influenced him in forming his opinion on the case. Undoubtedly the House was passionately divided on the merits of the case. The bulk of the Courtiers, Eliot tells us, willing probably to punish Sir Thomas for his opposition to Buckingham's war policy, went against Wentworth, while, on the other hand, the northern members were almost solid in his support. Eliot was probably right, in this connection, when he remarked that Wentworth "retained" a memory of the Courtiers "who banded against him, and others that for pure reason did oppose him, he forgott not".

Everything turned on the two members obtaining

¹ *Letters*, vol. i. p. 27: Sir Richard Beaumont to Wentworth, June 9, 1625.

² *Negotium posterorum*, pp. 101-3.

permission to bring up their witnesses from Yorkshire. For once, however, Wentworth proved less "knowing of the Paths of subtiltie" than his antagonist, who contrived to block this demand; and, further, when Wentworth's party urged that counsel should be heard, a division on the subject gave Savile a majority of thirty. Anyone but Wentworth should have been convinced that the game was now up. Not so Wentworth. Undefeated, he rose, claiming to be heard once more before judgement was passed. The sense of the House was, however, against him. It could not be denied that he had been given ample opportunities for his defence. Now "nothing could be added but protraction, which would be a further injurie to the House". Accordingly he withdrew, and the debate was proceeding, Eliot being in the midst of an oration, when Wentworth, characteristically unable to acquiesce in his defeat, "came in confidently to his place". Such an open disregard of the orders and procedure of the House was bound to bring rebuke, and the occasion was one which Eliot, whose fine debating instinct was never smothered beneath his wealth of rhetoric, was quick to seize. To Eliot, nurtured and steeped as he was in classic lore, Wentworth almost inevitably appeared, not as a Yorkshire squire intent on reiterating his grievance, despite all rule and precedent, but as the rebellious patrician of Republican Rome—Catiline, the sacrilegious invader of the Forum, held up to infamy in Cicero's immortal invective. If it cannot have been pleasant to Wentworth to be compared to so desperate a character of antiquity as Catiline, at least Eliot did not err in underestimating the man he denounced.

"Mr Speaker," he thundered, "the violating of our rights may well be excused by others, when they suffer violation by ourselves. When our own members practise it, when they shall do it in contempt, in the height of

scorn and injury, strangers and foreigners may be pardoned who have ignorance to plead for them, all their attempts and actions being not so prejudicial as our own.

"If we admit the dishonour of ourselves, how then shall others value us? And if we admit a dishonour by our members how shall we avoid it in ourselves? A greater dishonour and contempt this House has no time suffered than what does now affront it. To be excluded by a fundamental order of the House, so well known to all men, and that so lately urged by him that now does break it: to be debarred on question by a particular act and rule, and yet to intrude against it, what is it less than to bid defiance to your power, and a farewell to your privilege? Should I compare it, it could have no parallel but that Roman's against whom Cicero does inveigh. 'In senatum venit'—he comes into this Senate, but with a will to ruin it, for so I must interpret the intention of that act, that would destroy the privilege. But did I say it was a member did it? I must retract that error in the place, or be false to the opinion which I have; for either by the election he pretends, or for this act and insolence, I cannot hold him worthy of that name, and so (involving both questions under one) as a full determination of his case, let us from hence expel him."

"This", adds the orator, "made him presently removed, and quickened the resolution of the House."¹

That resolution was sealed by Glanville, who threw the weight of his great legal knowledge into the scale against the members, instancing precedent to prove that all freeholders, whether present at the reading of the writ or not, had a right to record their vote. Manifestly, the Sheriff had been in error. Nevertheless, although the elections were pronounced null and void, Sir Richard Cholmondeley was exonerated from censure. Wentworth and Fairfax had no choice save to bow to the decision of the House, and to return to Yorkshire to offer themselves for re-election.

¹ *Negotium Posterorum*, pp. 101-2.

Thus ended a contest which is memorable not only as affording the earliest proof of Wentworth's indomitable spirit, but as exhibiting the two protagonists of the great national quarrel in dramatic juxtaposition at the very initiation of their several careers. That Wentworth, defeated though he eventually was, made an impression on Eliot to which no other fellow-member could pretend, is evidenced by the stress he lays on the whole episode—an episode which in truth derived its importance from the chief actor. For instead of the phrase or epithet that sufficed him as a rule to characterise the *dramatis personae* of his record, Eliot pauses, and cannot deny himself the gratification of drawing his rival at full length. The portrait, coloured as it necessarily was by partisan and personal prejudice, is yet of extraordinary interest, and deserves to be cited.

"There was in that gentleman", writes Eliot, "a good choice of parts, natural and acquisit, and no less opinion of them. A strong eloquence he had, and a comprehension of much reason. His arguments were weighty and acute, and his descriptions exquisite. When he would move his hearers of his sense, he had both *acumina dictorum* and *ictus sententiarum* to effect them. His abilities were great both in judgment and persuasion, and as great a reputation did attend them. But those many and great virtues, as Livy says of Hannibal, as great vices paralleled, or rather they were in him, as Cicero notes in Catiline, *signa virtutum*, form of virtue only, not the matter: for they seldom were directed to good ends, and when they had that colour, some other secret moved them. His covetousness and ambition were both violent as were his ways to serve them *neque in pecunia, neque in gloria concupiscenda*, as Crassus is rendered by Paterculus, *aut modum novit, aut capiebat terminum*. And those affections raised him to so much pride and choler as any opposition did transport him, which rendered him less powerful to his adversaries, when the advantage was followed and perceived."¹

¹ *Negotium Posterorum*, p. 104.

The final decision of the House of Commons had been given on July 5, and by the 16th Wentworth was back in Yorkshire galvanising his supporters and his colleague into fresh activity.

He impressed on Fairfax that the gentry were to have it "handsomely infused into them" that the whole kingdom was looking to see if Sir John Savile was to carry it against them all.¹ The freeholders should understand that he and Fairfax had been "put forth by a faction for serving them honestly and boldly", and that moreover Savile had wronged them by bringing in apprentices who were not entitled to vote. Further, as the polling would prove a long business and the weather was hot, "2 hogsheads of wine, and a half score of beer" were prepared for the refreshment of their supporters—a provision which Wentworth was ready to provide, as he regarded it as highly necessary. These varied arguments duly carried the day, both members were returned, and on August 8 took their places once more in Parliament, now adjourned to Oxford.

The House was in no very good temper when Wentworth rejoined his former colleagues. The King had insisted on the adjournment being of the briefest, in the hopes of extracting the subsidies so greatly needed if the war with Spain was to be made effectual. But the House, having voted £140,000 whilst at Westminster, was not inclined to give more at Oxford. Members were in suspicious mood, suspicious of the concessions to the Catholics, which were thought, and justly thought, to be part of the marriage treaty with France; incensed that English ships had wellnigh co-operated with Louis XIII.'s troops against the rebellious Protestants at La Rochelle; and, most of all, sore and angry at the support they believed was given to the clergy and in particular to one Richard Montague, belonging to the Arminian or High Church

¹ *Fairfax Correspondence*, vol. i. p. 9: Sir T. Wentworth to Sir T. Fairfax, 1625.

section of the Establishment, author of *A New Gag for an Old Goose*. When Montague, challenging the Commons in a new pamphlet, reaffirmed his position he was committed to the Serjeant-at-Arms, and Charles could find no more tactful means to shield him than by alleging that as Montague was his chaplain he was exempt from parliamentary jurisdiction. Coming at the very moment when the tolerance extended to recusants consequent on Charles's marriage was bound to excite mistrust in the public mind, this was nothing short of a blunder.

With doctrinal disputes Wentworth was not inclined to meddle. Religious, and genuinely religious, he undoubtedly was. But the natural trend of his mind led him to agree with Laud's celebrated declaration imposing silence alike on both parties with regard to mysteries impossible of penetration to the finite mind, and certainly unfit for public discussion and wranglings. On the other hand, his governmental theories made him indisposed to relax the penal laws. Nor was he any more inclined than his friend Sir Francis Seymour, who opened proceedings at Oxford by attacking the Government's foreign policy, to vote large sums of money, which in Buckingham's hands had small chance of being expended for the national profit. If there was one subject which Wentworth made particularly his own in later life, it was the suppression of piracy. He effected this at a minimum of ships and cost. Yet the Lord High Admiral, backed by all the resources of the State, and with a fleet lying idle in the Channel, could not, or did not, prevent the kidnapping of English fishermen and the destruction of trade by the Turkish, Dutch, and Spanish sea-robbers, who drew rich harvests from the home seas. Whatever Sir Thomas's opinion was concerning Buckingham, he had, however, come to the conclusion that he would not join in the attack evidently brewing against the Duke. Wentworth's ideals, different

as they were from Eliot's, were none the less an intrinsic part of himself. Unlike Sir John, however, his ambitions were administrative, not constitutional. The manner was less important to him than the matter. Like Eliot, he cherished the memories of the spacious times of the great Queen, both for their record of common action between Sovereign and people and for the splendid national development which had then taken place. What he could not forgive was muddle, inefficiency, corruption, and mal-administration generally. Buckingham blocked the way to any reforms of importance, and still more to individual reformers, since neither his parasites nor his own vanity would suffer him to give an efficient personality room to do the work he could not himself achieve. Therefore it was only a question of time before Wentworth became pledged to oppose Buckingham. But he did not wish to enter himself formally in the ranks of the Duke's antagonists if there was another and a better way to his end, the better administration in which the qualities he knew himself to possess would have scope. Therefore, while lengthy discussions went on in the House as to whether the Commons would grant the King at least £40,000, without which his ministers declared that the fleet could not put to sea, Wentworth sat silent. He had never recanted his disapproval of the Spanish War, and the further continental alliances which Buckingham airily sketched for the benefit of the Commons were not likely to convert him to another opinion. If even the ardent spirits protested that they had never sanctioned operations or the subvention of operations for the recovery of the Palatinate, how much more distasteful must they have been to Wentworth, at a cost, too, of £400,000, while Buckingham owned the expenditure incurred "was an immense charge which the Kingdom is not well able to bear, if it should continue".¹

¹ Gardiner, vol. v. p. 420.

As the debate went on, Buckingham, the sole director, as it seemed, of the royal policy, could not escape criticism. The fact that, regardless of his secret promises to France, he had thrown the wretched recusants to the Puritans did not placate the latter. For the meanest intelligence could not fail to realise how unbecoming it was in the strenuous Protestant, who had broken off the Spanish match on the score of religion, secretly to enter into engagements well-nigh as onerous with another Catholic ruler—engagements which, if not avowed, were becoming known. Buckingham's record for untrustworthiness with the Spaniards, the King of France, and the Commons was in truth hard to surpass. And much as the ardent Protestant section of the House would have welcomed the opportunity of dealing a blow at the might of Spain, their liberality was held in check by well-founded doubts as to how their supplies would be dispensed. When they discovered that, far from having consulted with his naval commanders, the Duke had disregarded remonstrances, Buckingham's chances of obtaining even a paltry £40,000 diminished.

Before Sir Robert Mansell had made his damaging confession, Wentworth, though not directly incriminating Buckingham, had shown that he was no blind adherent to the Government policy. That the threat of dissolution should be used to force the Parliament into granting subsidies against its better judgement, grated on his sense of duty and responsibility. Further, he objected to treating the loan as one to which they were already pledged. "Engagement", he said, was "a prejudicial word, as if we were less forward than the last Parliament."¹ Not that he was "against giving, but against this manner to put upon us these sleights to give or else to adjourn. The course of subsidies", he characteristically remarked, "is not to be heady but to run softly. Let us first", he concluded, "doe

¹ Gardiner, vol. v. p. 427.

the business of the Commonwealth, appoint a Committee for petitions, and, after, he, for his part, will be well content to do as much for the King as any other."

Wentworth made his speech on August 10, and on August 11 news was brought of the atrocities almost daily committed by the pirates on the South Coast, in full view of the fleet. As the House discussed these outrages, its temper rose, the attack on the general inefficiency culminating in an outburst from Sir Francis Seymour, an outburst expressing the sentiments of the majority. "Let us lay the fault where it is," he cried. "The Duke of Buckingham is trusted, and it must be either in him or his agents." To this unanswerable proposition the answer was the appointment of a Committee of Grievances to frame a petition to be delivered in concert with the Upper House.

CHAPTER V

WENTWORTH had not singled out Buckingham for attack, though he had criticised the administration. But the Duke, who was as sensitive to blame as he was arrogant, was inclined to suspect Wentworth of sharing in the counsels of his opponents, and such a suspicion was the equivalent to exclusion from the councils of the State. For, as Sir A. Ingram told Wentworth:

“the Duke’s power with the King is exceeding great; and who he will advance shall be advanced, and who he doth but frown upon must be thrown down. All the great officers of the kingdom be now his creatures and at his command.”¹

This latter condition would alone have sufficed to bar the road to promotion for one of Wentworth’s temper. There was, however, even a worse impediment to Wentworth’s advancement.

“The Duke”, continued Ingram, “was, and is possessed that there were four in the Higher House that upon any complaint that should come up of him to them, that they with all their strength would set it forwards there. He is likewise possessed that there were divers combined against him in the Lower House. For them in the Higher House it was my Lord Grace of Canterbury (Abbot), my Lord Keeper (Williams), my Lord Marshal (Earl of Arundel), and my Lord Chamberlain (Earl of Pembroke). For them of the Lower House he doth conceive there were

¹ *Letters*, vol. i. p. 28: Sir A. Ingram to Wentworth, November 7, 1625.

many, who had their conferences with these four lords, and others that were depending upon them; among whom", Ingram pointedly told Wentworth, "you are not altogether free."

As usual in such cases, mischief-makers had not been wanting. The Chancellor of the Duchy, Sir Humphry May, in especial, had done Wentworth as "much wrong" with Charles and Buckingham as, on the other hand, Weston, the Chancellor of the Exchequer, had striven to do him "good offices".

Although Parliament had been dissolved in August, by December it was evident that the writs must once more be issued. In the interval, the expedition to Cadiz under Sir Edward Cecil had taken place and had ignominiously failed. Instead of returning with those Spanish galleons in tow, which were to furnish Buckingham with funds for the great Protestant confederacy of which he was to be the inspiring genius, the English ships could scarcely be kept afloat till they reached their native harbours. Jobbery and peculation had wrecked fleet and crews alike, hulls, sails, food, all was rotten on the men-o'-war, too soon transformed into floating hospitals. That, despite the vast scale on which this jobbery was perpetrated, no inquiry was made cannot have reconciled Wentworth to Buckingham's administration.

Apart from public subjects, Wentworth was, however, to be given ample personal cause for complaint against the favourite. Charles being convinced that innate perversity was solely responsible for the otherwise unaccountable opposition to his wishes, it was natural that he should believe that if the leaders were removed from the House of Commons all would go smoothly. Since sheriffs were the King's chief officers in their several counties they could not abandon their duties to attend Parliament, and accordingly Charles determined to "prick" for sheriffs

those gentlemen who had made themselves obnoxious at Oxford. Coke, Phelips, Seymour and in especial Sir Guy Palmes, who had indulged in historical parallels between Empson and Dudley and Buckingham, had fairly earned their promotion; but when Wentworth's name was brought forward, Charles signed with a protest. "Wentworth", said the King, "is an honest gentleman."

Wentworth may have derived satisfaction from the royal eulogy, yet, since the King signed, the honour was barren. The blow, it appeared, had been planned before the great Duke sailed on a fruitless mission to Holland, and from the decision then taken "the King would not change a tittle". Wentworth, Ingram considered, must seek for comfort in the knowledge that the business had gained him much honour with the public, "who speak most strangely of it, and for the rest", the old knight concluded, "there is now no more to say but to undergo it cheerfully".¹

Wentworth's shrewdness and sense of dignity counselled him no otherwise than Ingram. Consequently when Sir Francis Seymour sent him word that in spite of being the "Great Officer" of his own county, he could get Wentworth elected for some western constituency if Sir Thomas would do him a like service in the north, he showed small hesitation in declining the offer. From the legal point of view such a juggle might have frustrated the royal trick.² But as Wentworth told Lord Clare, it was better in a matter of this nature to confine oneself to the part of a spectator. To Wandesford he was more explicit.

"I will tell you", he writes, "my purpose is to carry myself in such a temper that for my expense it should participate of Moderation and Sobriety without the least tincture of Wantonness or Petulancy, which will both

¹ *Letters*, vol. i. p. 29: Ingram to Wentworth, November 1625.

² *Idem*, vol. i. p. 31: Earl of Clare to Wentworth, November 27, 1627.

better express the Sense wherewith I take it from above, and be more suiting to that just Regard I owe the Gentry of this County, to whom I have been so much beholden. . . . Therefore in a word come King, come Judge, I will keep myself within the Articles made when Sir Guy Palmes was Sheriff; and run Dog, run Cat, drink a red Ryall by the Place at least by God's Leave. The under-Sheriffwick I mean to execute by my own servants, and withal closely and quietly attend my own Private Fortune repairing and settling it with innocent hands, moderate and regulated Desires, and so repose myself upon the Goodness of the Almighty, that doth not only direct the Scourges of an Adversary, but doth even convert them into Health and Soundness. Can there be a fairer or fuller Revenge upon an Adversary in the World?"¹

Nevertheless, even among the "moderate and regulated Desires" he could so amply indulge at his beloved Wentworth Woodhouse, unwelcome thoughts would intrude.

"Yet I do lament", he cries, "sadly the miseries of these Times, being reduced to such a Prostration of Spirit as we are neither able to overcome the exulcerated Disease nor to endure a sharp prevalent Remedy."

In spite of these unwelcome thoughts, his mind, however, was made up. "Those above" he would "commit to their active heat." But for himself, according to the season of the year—December—he would fold himself up

"in a cold, silent forbearance, apply myself chearfully to the Duties of my Place, and heartily pray God to bless Sir Francis Seymour. For my rule, which I will not transgress, is never to contend with the Prerogative out of a Parliament, nor yet to contest with a King but when I am constrained thereunto, or else make shipwreck of my integrity and peace of Conscience, which I trust God will

¹ *Letters*, vol. i. pp. 32-3: Sir Thomas Wentworth to Christopher Wandesford.

ever bless me with, and with Courage too, to preserve it. Now seeing that in this neither of them are brought in question, I will, to use Sir Edward Coke's Phrase, quiet myself and according to my Fashion keep on a Spanish March, expecting that happy night that the King shall cause his Chronicles to be read wherein he shall find the Faithfulness of Mardocheus, the treason of his Eunuchs, and then let Haman look to himself."

The period of probation proved longer than this latter-day Mardocheus probably anticipated. Although his appointment as Sheriff was directly traceable to Buckingham, it is evident that Wentworth did not consider that the Duke's grudge was of a very serious nature. During the Oxford Parliament, the Lord Keeper Williams, then intent on retrieving Buckingham's favour, had striven to draw Buckingham and Wentworth together, and must have thought himself successful. For Wentworth, when replying to these advances "from and in behalf of the Duke of Buckingham with promise of his good Esteem and favour", had politely, if guardedly, declared that "he honoured the Duke's person and would be ready to serve him in the quality of an honest man and a gentleman".¹ On his side the Duke took Wentworth's answer "in good part", and sent him thanks, with the result that Wentworth had abstained from all personal attacks on Buckingham during that session. Thus all seemed harmonious. In November, however, occurred the episode of the Shrievalty, when Wentworth talked about Haman, a parallel George Villiers might have no less resented than that of Empson and Dudley. Then matters again assumed a more peaceable complexion; perhaps friends intervened, perhaps Wentworth's scrupulous correctness of attitude as Sheriff, and his apparent content in that character with the society of "Justices, Escheators, Juries, Bankrupts, Thieves and

¹ *Letters*, vol. i. p. 34: Sir Thomas Wentworth to Sir Richard Weston.

such kind of cattle", quieted Buckingham's jealousy. Anyhow by January 20, Wentworth cannot have been uneasy with regard to the minister's intentions, since he then made application through Lord Conway, the Chief Secretary of State, for the post of Lord President of the North, and being the last man to court a rebuff, must therefore have had some grounds to judge the moment opportune for complete reconciliation. Moreover, it should be added that this particular request carried no necessity with it for adhesion to Buckingham's foreign policy, since the work connected with the post withdrew him from the Duke's orbit.¹ Indeed, almost at the same period, Sir John Eliot, not yet definitely embarked on his crusade against Buckingham, was himself making personal requests for his particular friends, and, a little later, for himself, to members of the Government. It was still possible, therefore, to be a patriot and to remain on good terms with Buckingham, and Wentworth was shrewd enough to recognise that it was only through the Duke, or in virtue of his acquiescence, that he could hope to obtain scope for his talents in the administration of the country. Consequently, he told Conway in a letter which deserves quotation, if only as marking a stage in Wentworth's career,

"that I am fully resolved not to ascend one step in this kind except I may take along with me by the way a special obligation to my Lord Duke, from whose bounty and goodness I do not only acknowledge much already, but justified in the truth of my own heart doe still repose and rest under the Shadow and protection of his favour."²

Of answer to this appeal there is no record. But Buckingham's tone cannot have been unfriendly, for when Wentworth was at Whitehall in the following Whitsun-

¹ Browning's *Life of Strafford*, Introduction by Sir C. Firth, xx, and App. p. 290.

² *State Papers Dom. Charles I.*, vol. xviii. p. 110: Wentworth to Lord Conway, January 20, 1625/26.

tide, the Duke, in Weston's presence, assured him that his appointment as Sheriff had been made without his knowledge, whilst he was abroad. On another occasion, George Villiers went further, and "was pleased", in his own words, to "contract a frendship with Wentworth, all former mistakes laid asleep, forgotten". Small wonder that all these "good words and good usage" bred in Wentworth "a great deal of content, a full security".¹

The awakening from this peaceful condition when it came was all the more sensational. In the beginning of July 1626, while Wentworth was sitting at the County Court transacting business as High Sheriff, he was handed a notice of his dismissal from the office of Custos Rotulorum, with the further intimation that the post was already bestowed on his arch-enemy, Sir John Savile. No thunderbolt falling at his feet could have been less expected than this abrupt and apparently motiveless dismissal. But Wentworth never gave proof of greater self-control than in his reception of the royal missive, though with his usual directness he did not fear to characterise such "poor, vain, insulting Humour".

"My Lords and Gentlemen," he said, "I have here, even as I sit, received His Majesty's writ for putting me out of the Custoship I held in the Commission of the Peace, which shall by me be dutifully and chearfully obeyed. Yet I could wish they who succeed me had forborn this Time this service, a place, in sooth, ill chosen, a Stage ill-prepared for venting such poor, vain, insulting Humour. Nevertheless, since they will needs thus weakly breathe upon me a seeming Disgrace in the publick face of the County, I shall crave leave to wipe it away as openly, as easily, seeing I desire not to overlive the Opinion of an honest man amongst you, which in the Course of the World we see others regard too little.

"Shortly then, I have for divers years served the last

¹ *Letters*, vol. i. p. 35: Wentworth to Weston.

King of ever blessed memory, His Majesty that now is, and this County in the Commissions of Oyer and Terminer, that of the Peace and Counsel. I have been employed from hence in Parliament as oft as most men of my age, and now attend, albeit unworthily, as Sheriff. Throughout I am ready, under the Great Goodness of God, yet with all Humility and Modesty to justify myself in despite of any Detraction and Calumny, even upon the Price of my Life, never to have declined forth of the open and plain ways of Loyalty and Truth towards their Majesties, never to have falsified in a tittle the precious and general Trust of my Country, never to have injured or overborn the meanest particular under the disguised mask of Justice or Power.

"Therefore shame be from henceforth to them that deserve it. For I am well assured now to enjoy within myself a lightsome Quiet as formerly. The World may well think I knew the way, which would have kept my Place. I confess it had been too dear a Purchase, and so I leave it, not conscious of any fault in myself, nor yet guilty of the Vertue in my successor that should occasion this Removal."¹

The question as to what can have happened in the short interval (the letter dismissing Wentworth is dated July 8) since the gracious audience at Whitehall, to bring about so great a change, has never been completely solved. We do, however, know that Savile had meanwhile contrived to obtain Buckingham's patronage, and had consequently become reconciled to Lord Scrope, who realised that it was better to have Savile as a supporter than as an opponent. Whatever were Sir John's failings he was a shrewd man of business, and so long as Lord Scrope could remain Lord President he was ready to leave to him the direction of affairs in the Council.² Savile therefore became not merely *Custos Rotulorum*, but Vice-President of the Council of the North, a Privy Councillor, and a year later Comptroller of the Household and Receiver of the Composition

¹ *Letters*, vol. i. p. 36: Sir Thomas Wentworth's Speech.

² Rachel Reid, *The Council of the North*, p. 398.

Moneys of the Northern Recusants. This latter post afforded him ample opportunities for lining his pockets and augmenting his influence by underhand means, since Yorkshire was still the most Papistical county in England. And as long as Savile was in favour with Buckingham he ran no risk of having his methods called in question. Undoubtedly, he made the best of these opportunities, and paid for his promotion by his very successful efforts to raise the forced loan of 1627. The gang of self-seekers on the Council was now complete, and as long as they ruled the northern province, Wentworth must bid farewell to any hope of serving his country.

Though old Howley's intrigues were patent to the most casual observer, the motives of Buckingham's abrupt change of attitude have never been disclosed. The fact that Wandesford, Wentworth's great friend, was one of the managers of the Duke's impeachment may partly account for it, but Mr. Gardiner is inclined to ascribe the episode, like most of the crying evils of that period, to finance.

On June 15, Parliament, having refused either to drop the prosecution of Buckingham or to vote more money for him to waste, had been dissolved, though money was more than ever a necessity with Charles. Want of faith on Charles's part, domestic squabbles, and Buckingham's peculiar diplomacy had brought the royal brethren-in-law to the verge of hostilities—France, on whom England had counted against Spain, being already allied to the Most Catholic monarch. In this crisis, Charles ordered the Justices of the Peace to levy from the commonalty the equivalent of the four subsidies which Parliament would have voted had the Act become law. Wentworth, who disliked the war with Spain, was bound doubly to abominate the war with Spain and France, and would never have entrusted the riches of the country to be squandered for that purpose by Buckingham, who had shown himself so

bad an organiser of a far smaller campaign. To such an appeal his answer was certain to be in the negative, and, if so, the answer spelt not only his "destitution" but the triumph of his personal rival.

Although Wentworth, on his dismissal, had declared himself content to enjoy a "lightsome quiet", neither he nor his audience can have expected that this aspiration would be fulfilled.¹ Indeed, scarcely any man in his position who, like Wentworth, had declined to subscribe to the "free gift" can seriously have hoped to be peacefully ignored by the Government of that day. Given Charles's mentality, and the fact that this effort to raise the wind had proved a failure, it was practically certain that the King would proceed to other and more drastic means to obtain the funds needed to defray his own and Buckingham's continental adventures.

For a "free gift", a "forced loan" was accordingly substituted. The Court party argued that as forced loans, under the title of Privy Seals, were not infrequently used to produce money, a little manipulation and extension of this method might finance the King without infringing the statute of benevolences. In September 1626 this scheme was consequently initiated, the county of Middlesex being selected for the first trial of strength. The Commissioners appointed to collect the sums assessed were required to set a good example by heading the subscription list; moreover, they were to make it clear that a refusal to subscribe would entail being bound over for contempt before the Privy Council. The sum it was thus hoped to extort was fixed at five subsidies, and all those rated in the subsidy books were amenable to the call.

The fear of the Court lay heavy on its immediate neighbourhood, and payments trickled in. Then a pause was brought about by the judges' attitude. They were ready

¹ Gardiner, vol. vi. pp. 143-4.

to subscribe to the loan, but they refused to certify its legality. Charles might dismiss the Chief Justice. He could not shake the judgement, and still less the authority, of the Bench. A fair proportion of Peers followed the judges' lead, and by the next year it was evident that the success of the scheme hinged on the pressure which Privy Councillors and Commissioners could bring to bear in the course of their visitations to the various counties. Refusal meant imprisonment for the gentry; while the poor commonalty ran the risk of being pressed for the King of Denmark's army—alternatives so unpleasant that the courage of high and low, in standing out against the forced loan, is one of those collective actions which should always be put to the credit of the English race.

Since Wentworth had declined to contribute to the free gift, it was unlikely that he would subscribe to the "forced loan". The whole business was a thinly veiled design to extort money without parliamentary sanction. Should it succeed, an Englishman could neither regard himself as master of his own purse nor expect to have a voice in the spending of his own money. To Wentworth, who loathed foreign adventures, and craved for King and Parliament to turn their attention to home affairs, this second consideration was probably the more potent. He had a personal acquaintance with conditions in England and Europe to guide him, and the born-and-bred organiser's contempt for Buckingham's wild-cat excursions. True, however, to his resolve to avoid the "least tincture of Wantonness and Petulancy", he lay low at Wentworth, knowing that on some occasions the defensive position is the stronger.

He was not allowed, however, to remain passive; and eventually he was forced to make his choice. In the spring of 1627 he received a Privy Seal demanding forty pounds towards the compulsory loan, or compulsory gift, as it

should have been described, since there was no prospect of repayment. At this crisis, the friends and relations who knew his opinions spared no trouble to induce him to avoid a conflict with the Government. Even at this early period Wentworth's health gave cause for anxiety, and Lord Clifford and other correspondents were evidently alarmed at the effect confinement might have upon him.

"My dear Brother," wrote Lord Clifford, "this night your Friends here have thought fit to give you this speedy advertisement that the stream runs daily stronger and stronger against the refusers, and this Day, the Gentlemen of Lincolnshire are all committed to the Prisons here in London, and those who have remained here so long imprisoned are to be sent to private houses severally into several Shires, most remote from their own County, without so much liberty as to go to the Church. And every man here, that loves you, wish you may not run so much hazard both of your Life and Fortune. The Letters I hear are gone to the Commissioners to receive your answer, and therefore we that wish you would give, do wish you would do it readily and freely at their motion. But if you cannot be persuaded thereunto, then for my part I would have you desire the Commissioners to give you leave to give your answer here in person before the Lords, engaging your word unto them to come up presently (which we would have you do with all speed). My dear Brother, how perplexed I am about this particular these ragged Lines can partly witness, and it is now almost midnight when I write them. Accept them, I pray you as the present of a faithful and affectionate heart which affects nothing more than your Safety and Happiness, for which you may provide in time. I have expressly sent away this Bearer by Post, by whom I hope to receive comfortable News from you and so I go to Rest.

"Your most affectionate brother and servant,

H. CLIFFORDE."¹

¹ *Letters*, vol. i. pp. 36-7: Lord Clifford to Sir Thomas Wentworth, St. Martin's Lane, April 30, 1627.

Lord Clifford did not minimise dangers, and a far more weighty adviser, Lord Baltimore, was equally emphatic.

"The least", he wrote, "is the sum demanded of you, and little it is indeed in comparison of your body alone (whereof I know the loss will endanger your health), the freedom of your will being ever reserved entire, as in this case you may make yourself if you please by the manner of your lending. And so neither forfeit your own, nor by your example prejudice the common right of the subject."¹

Advice from Lord Baltimore was not to be slighted, and many a patriot might have been persuaded into giving with a protest to salve his conscience. His friends, moreover, took care that Wentworth should not ignore the fact that in refusing the loan he would play straight into Sir John Savile's hands.

"It was supposed", also wrote Lord Haughton, "this humour of committing had been spent, till that your antagonist did revive it; who, I hear, brags he hath you in a toil or dilemma; if you refuse, you shall run the fortune of the other Delinquents; if you come in at the last hour into the vineyard, he hopes it will lessen you in the country."²

It must have been gall and wormwood to Wentworth to realise that Savile, his despised adversary, was engineering his destruction. But neither this knowledge, nor his friends' entreaties could move him from his resolution.

"May it please you", he wrote to the Commissioners, "I have this day received your letter, dated the 10th of this instant, wherein I am required to be with you at York, on Wednesday next. The occasion is, I perceive, concerning the late loan to His Majesty, by me as yet unpaid. I should precisely have observed your time if

¹ *Letters*, vol. i. p. 37: Lord Baltimore to Wentworth, May 1, 1627.

² *Idem*, vol. i. pp. 37-8: Lord Haughton to Wentworth, St. Bartholomews, May 19, 1627.

infirm bodies were as ready ministers of the mind as pens, out of which reason I trust my absence will be rightly interpreted and held excused by you. This gentle proceeding of the Lords of the Council (when they might have sent for me by pursuivant) I humbly acknowledge; and therefore to apply myself unto their command in the dutifullest manner, I shall desire that with your good leaves, I may present my own answer at the Board, which I will early, by God's help, undertake to perform in as short a space as the moderate care of my health will admit, and ease you thereby of any further trouble or burthen.

"But if it so fall forth as you shall not think good to grant me this request, I will then wait upon you before the end of this week, albeit I be carried in a litter. Thus desiring to understand by the bearer your good pleasure therein I rest.

"Your very affectionate friend,

THOMAS WENTWORTH."¹

This letter shows that Lord Baltimore had good reason to dread the effect of imprisonment on Wentworth's health, for the writer was the last person to malingering or make false excuses on that score. But whether he rode or was carried in a litter, by the 19th of June he had appeared before the Privy Council in London, and, according to Wandesford, the President "reported well of his carriage at the table".² As, however, Sir Thomas firmly refused to pay, his courtesy did not prevent his being committed, on July 4, to the Marshalsea prison, which, like all the London gaols, was considered an eminently undesirable residence in the height of Summer.³ In particular, Wandesford wrote to his friend, evidently much perturbed "lest that prison and this season give you a nightcap in good earnest".

¹ *Life of Thomas Wentworth, Earl of Strafford*, by Elizabeth Cooper, vol. i. p. 45. Quoted from *S.P. Dom. Charles I.*, 1627, p. 65, folio 12.2. Sir Thomas Wentworth to the Commissioners, Thornhill, May 27, 1627.

² *Privy Council Registers, Charles I.*, vol. iii. p. 23.

³ *Letters*, vol. i. p. 39: Wandesford to Sir Thomas Wentworth.

Of all the ills Wentworth faced in life, physical ills were those he brushed most contemptuously aside, and his conduct on this occasion was no exception to his iron rule of self-control. He seems also to have managed to be cheerful for his friends as well as for himself; for when, at George Radcliffe's request (Radcliffe having preceded him at the Marshalsea), he attempted to reconcile Mrs. Radcliffe to her husband's imprisonment, his consolations were rather of the bracing than soothing variety.

"If I were not confident of your discretion", he wrote, "to discern between true and seeming dangers, I might spend some tyme in going about to comfort you; but I will not wrong you so much as once to mention him all this tyme, more than in this sort that I shall only joyne with you to pray God to send him his health and well at Overthorpe again, which I trust will be in a few months at the furthest. In the mean time there is sum occasion to exercise your patience. I confesse that I beseech God you may never have greater cause and then I shall not pittie you much. God's blessing and mine to your boy."¹

The great man's sympathy and prayers were doubtless a satisfaction to the wife in the little manor house on the wolds, but it was well perhaps that Radcliffe's consolations were of a less austere type. At a later period, when their friendship had been tested alike by triumph and adversity, Strafford was to call Sir George his friend *imprimis*, and Radcliffe's letter to his wife on this occasion deserves to be quoted if only to throw light on the nature of the man to whom the great Proconsul accorded such entire love and confidence.

"According to my expectation", writes Radcliffe, "I am now committed to prison, which the less troubles me, because it was expected; and in truth, although restraint of libertye be a thing which naturally all avoid, yet in this

¹ *Life of Sir George Radcliffe*, by Whitaker, p. 141: Sir Thomas Wentworth to Mrs. Radcliffe, May 1627.

restraint I thank God, I enjoy as much contentment as ever I did in my life, never more comfort of my friends, nay never so much as at this time, never more joy than at this tyme; my health is as well as ever. And here we have exceeding good company, pleasant and sweet walkes, and every kind usage beyond expectation in a prison. There is nothing awanting but your company", says this affectionate husband, who proceeds to praise his wife for "the moderation and discretion" she had used in dissuading him "from refusing to lend, but with what modesty and respect you did desist after you once perceived my resolution. Assure yourself, that howsoever my indiscretion makes me subject to error, yet in the maine, by God's assistance, I shall doe nothing that shall be either grossly offensive or prejudiciall; and I knowe you are persuaded that this sufferinge (if it deserves the name of sufferinge) will in the ende turne to my good. Remember my duty to my Mother and desire her blessing for me; and I pray you persuade her not to be discomfited by the report of my imprisonment, but rather to expect shortly to hear of my enlargement, which I hope will be both decent and speedy; for I had rather stay longer than come off with dishonour; but in probability I shall be put to neither."¹

Radcliffe was evidently of those who echo the immortal protest that "stone walls do not a prison make", and that "minds innocent and quiet take that for an hermitage". Nevertheless, whatever the charms of the Marshalsea, as depicted for a nervous wife, both Wentworth and George Radcliffe must have welcomed their transference—on July the 27th—to Dartford, in Kent, where they remained for close on five months.²

Those five months were undoubtedly amongst the most damaging to the national reputation recorded in our history. Charles's squabbles with his royal brother-in-law had culminated in an attack on France, which from the outset

¹ Whitaker, *Life of Sir George Radcliffe*, p. 139: Radcliffe to his wife.

² *Privy Council Registers*, vol. iii. p. 77, July 27, 1627.

was more unpopular than any previous war with our traditional enemy; and the disastrous expedition of the Ile de Rhé abroad was matched by an equally ignominious condition of affairs at home.

To Wentworth, who described the ideal State as the "joint individual well-being of sovereignty and subjection", these conditions must have seemed a travesty of government; and the long months at Dartford, where he complained that "the foggy air afflicted his brain", must have tried even his spirit. In this melancholy interlude, however, he experienced one supreme satisfaction. In October, his wife, whom he loved as only the strong know how to love, bore him her second child, Anne, the idolised "Nan", to whom at the crisis of his fate he could declare, "however fortune befall us, let me tell you, I shall willingly give you the first good of it and content myself with the second".¹

In his letter of congratulation, as Denzil Holles remarked, it was well "that in our private respects we may have some cause of joy since the Publick affords us so little, for you see how that goes on *de mal en pis*, as the French say". And certainly the account he proceeds to give of the engagement and the "most shameful Déroute" of the English force at the Isle of Rhé justifies "this censure that it was ill begun, worse ordered in every particular, and the success accordingly most lamentable". "This only every man knows, that since England was England it received not so dishonourable a blow."²

It is easy to picture Wentworth, with his passion for "thorow", which he was to put into practice so effectually when raising and drilling his Irish army, sitting impotent, consumed with anger and disgust, at Dartford. Those days and nights of wrathful meditation go far to explain his

¹ Fitzwilliam MSS.: Strafford to Lady Anne Wentworth, The Tower, April 19, 1641.

² *Letters*, vol. i. pp. 41-2: Denzil Holles to Wentworth, Dorchester, Nov. 19.

attitude in the coming Parliament. But at the moment he could merely say Amen to Denzil's prayer, "that God who alone can draw Light out of darkness, will be pleased to give us a better issue out of our present miserable condition than any of us expect, though we may hope and pray for it". As we know, it is the darkest hour that comes before the dawn. Denzil Holles's letter bears the date of November the 19th. On November the 22nd, Hampden and four other gentlemen, committed to prison for the same reason as Wentworth, were brought up to the King's Bench to sue out their Habeas Corpus. There was no doubt as to the sympathies of the audience, and if the prisoners did not gain their suit, yet Charles did not score a victory. For though bail was not granted, the judges refused to allow that the King could indefinitely persist in his refusal to show cause for their detention.¹

Continued failure in the wars, continued disturbances at home, the judges developing misgivings, the Court party itself becoming nervous, all these causes were wearing away even the royal obstinacy. On the 14th of December Wentworth obtained leave to go to London "for the space of six days for the dispatch of some business very much concerning him".² The business transacted, he

¹ Gardiner, vol. vi. p. 217.

² *Privy Council Registers*, vol. iii. 229, December 14, 1627.

One of the very few letters of Lady Arabella which have survived is dated from Dartford and was probably addressed to Wentworth during this absence. Though not in itself important, it gives an impression of such an affectionate spirit that it deserves to be given:

"Sir, I heard yesterday from my Mother, she is reasonable well again. I thank God my Sister writes my Mother is going half a dozen miles out of the Town, as you may see by her letter which I send here enclosed. I pray you desire my Mother to come to Dartford until my Lord come up. We have all, God be prayed yet had our healths well here, saving only for my pain in my head and back, and that ill aire which will follow me wheresoever I go. I pray you send ye boy back ye same day for he hath two horses to looke unto. I have paid Clampe for seven horses which have been hereby by times this week, here is also no oats left, neither do I know where to have any bought. Ye children are all very well God be thanked, so I rest.

"Your most faithful and ever loving wife,

"ARABELLA WENTWORTH.

"Pray you, remember my love to my Brother Will. Good Sir, remember my

returned apparently to Dartford, since it was there that Sir Humphry May addressed the letter announcing his release. The matter of the communication must have been more agreeable than its manner.

"Sir, Yesternight out of more grace and favour than all you refractory Fools can deserve, His Majesty gave order for a general releasement out of your several confinements. I call you Fools, as well for the damage you have done to yourselves, as for the interest of our Posterities that may suffer by your ill example; do not construe this course as an argument of a Parliament at hand, for I protest faithfully it is very far from it. I send you this notice that you may presently advise to dispose of yourself; within a day or two the Shrieve will receive warrant for your discharge, but in the meantime you may take your Liberty if you have a mind to it, for the King already hath expressed his pleasure.

"Your Friend and Servant,

H. MAY."¹

Wentworth earned many names in the course of his career, but this must have been the single occasion on which he was called "fool". So violent an outburst from the Chancellor of the Duchy, a man generally noted for his conciliatory tone, shows that the tempers of the Court party were distinctly ruffled. Nor was the prospect which lay before them reassuring.

Though Sir Humphry May might "faithfully protest" that there was no likelihood of a Parliament to call ministers and minions to account, forces were abroad in the land against which Charles's obstinacy was not proof,

humble duty to my Mother and my love to my Sister. I have not written for fear ye boy should stay so long. He may go thither and bring me word how you do. God send you soon home."

Fitzwilliam MSS.: Lady Arabella Wentworth to Wentworth, Dartford, this Tuesday night.

¹ Wentworth MSS.: Sir H. May to Sir Thomas Wentworth at Dartford in Kent, December 27.

and on January the 30th, 1628, a month after May's peevish declaration, the King signed the writs for a new Parliament. On January the 2nd, Wentworth, Hampden, and the other sufferers for the same cause had already been set free.¹

¹ *Privy Council Registers.*

CHAPTER VI

ON March the 17th, 1628, Parliament met, and it was at once apparent that the country had refused to endorse the royal policy. Imprisonment for refusal to contribute to the loan was, as Wentworth found, a direct passport to election. Laud opened proceedings by a sermon on the text: "Endeavour to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace". But, as Mr. Gardiner in one of his rare ironical passages has remarked, this was the last of Charles's endeavours.¹ There was a strong element of the pedagogue in the King's composition, and it was in this spirit that he now addressed both Houses, warning them that if they failed to assist him in meeting the common danger, he would use those "other means which God had put into my hands, to save that which the follies of some particular men may otherwise hazard to lose. Take not this as a threatening," concluded that most tactless of sovereigns, "for I scorn to threaten any but my equals, but an admonition."

The effect of the so-called admonition was patent when the Lower House got to business. Supply was a burning necessity to the King, but the Commons were not to be deluded into granting supply before their undoubted wrongs were righted. To Sir Francis Seymour, who urged that "he is no good subject but a slave that will let his goods be taken from him against his will, and his liberty against the laws of the Kingdom",² succeeded Eliot, who,

¹ Gardiner, vol. vi. p. 231.

² *Idem*, vol. vi. p. 233.

in reply to May's supplications, declared that it was impossible to forgive and forget, since the very existence of the ancient laws and liberties of England was at stake.

"Upon this dispute not alone our lands and goods are engaged but all that we call ours. These rights, these privileges which made our forefathers freemen, are in question."

Rudyard, appealing for the subsidies, as a preliminary to a petition to the King, was an opponent unworthy of Eliot, who preceded, or of Wentworth, who followed him; and, indeed, when Sir Thomas rose it was at once clear that the Opposition had found their leader.

Then, as later, with Tudor precedents to guide him, Wentworth was bound to admit the right implicitly vested in the Sovereign to act in a national emergency on his own initiative, to imprison, and to requisition funds. As he himself put it: "let us make what laws we can, there must—nay, there will be—a trust left in the Crown", the equivalent in the seventeenth century of that trust allotted in the twentieth century to the Cabinet for foreign treaties. But the emergency which now confronted the King was purely of his own and his favourite's making, the reversal of all that Wentworth desired and sought to establish. Wentworth could not admit that this was a crisis which sanctioned illegalities. Nevertheless, it was not the King personally, it was the instruments of his policy that he would have held responsible. Remembering the "personal Government" of Charles I., this may seem a fiction rather dishonest than polite. It must, however, also be remembered that until Charles himself exploded the constitutional maxim that the King can do no wrong, that maxim was held in no less honour by the many loyal gentlemen returned with a mandate to right crying evils than it was by Wentworth himself. The Whig historians, who have

formed our conceptions of the *dramatis personae* of that age, have pictured Strafford as the embodiment of ruthlessness. Yet in this Parliament he exhibited not merely readiness to work with others, but showed himself eager to effect a compromise that would achieve the common purpose without leaving behind it a rankling sense of defeat. In fact his object was to make it easy for Charles to climb down without a loss of dignity, a loss which he realised would never be forgiven. Accordingly, though he ranged himself by Eliot and Hampden's side, his speech is punctuated by deferences and courtesies even beyond the wont of that ceremonious age. Unlike Eliot and the other great Parliamentarians, he was not concerned with the religious question, or, at least, he did not see it through their eyes. His whole mental "make-up" and temperament inclined him to sympathise with the Laudian rather than the Puritan standpoint. It was on the straightening of practical, concrete matters that Wentworth was bent. He could invoke high ideals, he could clothe his appeals in the rich dialect of that spacious period, but, unlike his actual allies, theories were not the motive force underlying his actions. Where many of them worshipped the spirit of the English Constitution, his mind centred on precedents and their workable outcome. No less than to Pym was the weal of the Commonwealth Wentworth's aim. But the royal prerogative appeared to him a fitter instrument to achieve that end than it could ever have seemed to his present comrade and future foe.

Pym himself could hardly have spoken with greater reverence of Parliament than Wentworth.

"It was", he said, "the great physician to effect a true consent between King and people. Though both (King and people) be innocent, yet both are injured, both to be cured. In the representation of injuries I shall crave your attention; in the cure, I shall beseech your equal cares

and better judgments. In the greatest humility I speak it, these illegal ways are punishment and marks of indignation. The raising of money by loans, strengthened by Commission with unheard of instructions, the billeting of soldiers by the lieutenants have been as if they could have persuaded Christian princes, nay worlds, that the right of empire was to take away goods by strong hand; and they have endeavoured as far as was possible for them to do it."

In denouncing these evils, Wentworth could, however, declare, without fear of contradiction, that they were not to be imputed to the King, but to

"projectors. These have extended the prerogative of the King beyond its just limits. Which means the sweet harmony of the whole. They have rent from us", he continued, "the light of our eyes; enforced companies of guests worse than the ordinances of France; brought the Crown to greater want than ever it was by anticipating the revenue; and can the Shepherd be thus smitten, and the flock be not scattered? They have introduced a Privy Council ravishing at once the spheres of all ancient government, imprisoning us without bail or bond. They have taken from us, what shall I say? Indeed, what have they left us? They have taken from us all means of supplying the King, and ingratiating ourselves with him by tearing up the roots of all property; which if they be not seasonably set into the ground by His Majesty's hand we shall have instead of beauty, baldness.

"To the making of all these whole, I shall apply myself and propound a remedy to all these diseases. By one and the same thing hath the King and the People been hurt, and by the same must they be cured. To vindicate what? New things? No; our ancient lawful and vital liberties, by reinforcing the ancient laws made by our ancestors, by setting such a stamp upon them as no licentious spirit shall dare hereafter to enter upon them."¹

¹ *Two Speeches made by Sir Thomas Wentworth, now Earl of Strafford, in the Parliament holden at Westminster 1628, the one concerning the Liberty of the Subject, the other the Privileges of the Houses*, printed by J. Ashton, 1641.

The remedies for these evils were freedom from imprisonment and from being forced "against our consents" into employments abroad contrary to the customs of this kingdom; no levies to be made without Parliament's sanction, and no billeting of soldiers. How these ends should be achieved must be left to a grand committee.

In this speech, with the exception of the condemnation of martial law—a later addition—Wentworth had outlined the future legislation to be embodied in the "Petition of Right". As Mr. Gardiner says: "If Coke was finally to give the Petition its form, Wentworth was the originator of its substance".¹

Had Charles been amenable to honest advice, he must have consented to Wentworth's demands, which represented the minimum requirements of his subjects. But he had none of that intuitive perception which had floated Elizabeth's barque through storms and reefs. His promise that he would remedy grievances when subsidies were voted was too obvious a snare. No sooner had the House gone into committee than they showed plainly that before supply was considered they must be secured in their goods and liberties.

Seldom has a monarch found himself in a more embarrassing situation, for Charles, who had his point of honour, felt he would be eternally disgraced if he abandoned La Rochelle and its starving inhabitants to the destruction he had brought upon them.

Merely to maintain the services required £700,000, and an additional £600,000 would be needed in the coming twelve months. Not daring to mention such huge sums, Charles merely indicated the heads of expenditure, unaccompanied by figures—estimates, if they could be so called, which the Commons contemptuously brushed aside, setting themselves to condemn all taxation unlicensed by Parliament. It was a more debatable question

¹ Gardiner, vol. vi. p. 237.

whether the Sovereign should be allowed to commit to prison without showing cause. *Raison d'État* has never obtained currency in England. But a suspension of Habeas Corpus is a proceeding not unknown even in modern times; though it can only be invoked and justified by a national cataclysm. The power now vested in the Executive was not then denied to the Crown—and justly, since the machinery of Parliamentary Government being clogged by unavoidable delays it was the instrument designed by fate for that purpose. With Charles, however, normal conditions were abnormal. In fine, he could not be trusted with anything resembling a dispensing power, and the problem that lay before Parliament was how to save their liberties without destroying a possible means of preservation for the nation. The situation was complicated by the fact that under stress of circumstance many lawyers had acquiesced in these illegal imprisonments. The chief spokesman on the legal side, Sir Edward Coke, could not show a clean record in the matter, and, when attacked by so poor an antagonist as Shilton, the Attorney-General, floundered about in clumsy exculpations until rescued by Wentworth, who disposed of the tormentor with the sarcastic remark: "Mr. Solicitor hath done that which belongs to his place, but not so ingeniously as he might".¹

In the order sarcastic it is as much the personality of the speaker as the actual utterance that tells. Wentworth's faculty for ironic comment was formidable, and henceforth Shilton was prudent. A week later, on April 1, the committee laid it down that no man might be committed, or forfeit his right to a habeas corpus, without cause shown; and further, if no legitimate reason for imprisonment was established he was entitled to bail or release.

When the heads of expenditure and the question of supply came up for examination, Eliot and Wentworth's

¹ Gardiner, vol. vi. p. 243.

methods already showed divergence. Eliot wished to probe into the case for the war. Wentworth vetoed such barren researches. Nor did he desire the House to make itself responsible for the allocation of subsidies. It was waste of time to review the genesis of those eminently unsuccessful hostilities. The measure of supply should be generous, its distribution should be left to the Government, but nothing should reach the Treasury until they had assurance that their grievances would be righted.

"I will not fall", he said, "into the deep of foreign actions, but address myself to particulars. I cannot forget the duty I owe my country, and unless we be secured in our liberties we cannot give."¹

Since no assurance was forthcoming, he moved and carried the adjournment of the debate to the 4th.

The committee, being determined not to fritter away its time during this adjournment, set itself to tightening and expanding the resolutions. The practice of confining peers and gentlemen, who had incurred the Government's displeasure, in their own or other people's houses—as had been the case with Wentworth—was voted illegal. The billeting of soldiers aroused yet more bitter comments. The misconduct of the army was due to the fact that owing to lack of pay, officers and men, rather than starve, naturally elected to live on the country. Charles declared that this was the fault of his recalcitrant and miserly lieges. But Wentworth was justified in his contention that "projectors had brought the Crown to greater want than ever it was by anticipating the revenue"; and that the disorders and rioting which had occurred were the answer to his query: "Can the Shepherd be thus smitten and the flock be not scattered?" Charles, feeling himself a thoroughly misunderstood being, was aggrieved. He de-

¹ Gardiner, vol. vi. p. 246.

spatched Secretary Coke to assure the House that he was not angry, and that Buckingham was not uttering malicious words against them. Let them dutifully and unconditionally vote supplies and he would confirm them in their liberties. The committee paid scant attention to the royal exhortation; and, having reported the resolutions on imprisonment and taxation to the House, proceeded to discuss the vexed subject of pressing for the army and navy. This was a practice that had grown up on the decay of the feudal system under the Tudor reigns. The arguments for and against pressing are evidence that there is nothing new under the sun, since they often anticipate the discussions on conscription with which the War made us familiar. It is therefore not surprising to find that, though Selden declared pressing to be illegal, various speakers besides Wentworth questioned whether an army could otherwise be levied. If the King could not legally levy troops, it was desirable that he should be invested with a properly regulated power of doing so. Thereupon Wentworth urged the appointment of a committee to consider this question, and his motion was immediately accepted. In fact, it was evident that Wentworth was "he who at this juncture had the greatest sway in the House".

His influence was again paramount when the House went into Committee of Supply, for it was owing to him that Eliot agreed to drop his examination into expenditure, thus freeing the House from all future responsibility for the prosecution of the war. This was a wise decision, since the money not being earmarked it was impossible for Charles to pretend that his mistakes were the result of dictation by the members.

When the number of subsidies was debated, the House elected once more to follow Wentworth rather than Eliot, who, alarmed at the proposal to grant five subsidies, moved the adjournment. In fact, Wentworth represented the

spirit of compromise which is the hall-mark of the English gentleman turned politician. He voiced the general desire to give the King no cause for complaint, while, on the other hand, he was equally determined that popular wrongs should be redressed. Moreover, he was as shrewd as he was determined, and, the subsidies being voted, he moved that no report of the vote should be made to the House. He did not forget that in 1626 Charles had tried to levy the subsidies offered, though not voted by the House, and he was determined to guard against such attempts in the future. No official record remained in the absence of report on which the Government could ground a similar pretension. In fact, the bargain must be completed, signed, and sealed before the country's money passed from its guardians' keeping into the Exchequer.

The next stage was the presentation of the resolutions to the Peers, a course recommended by the committee to which Wentworth belonged. His scheme did not, however, consist merely of a recital of precedents, for if tradition was dear to Wentworth he had the boldness of the born organiser. His plan was to appoint a sub-committee to draw up a law "which may assure us of our liberty of our persons and property of our goods before we report the resolution of our gift".¹ Legal decisions were all very well, but, as the wrangle between Shilton and Coke showed, a clever lawyer could tear them to pieces, while the measure Wentworth proposed would avoid irritating Charles by casting up against him the full tale of his illegalities.

The voting of a large sum had, for the moment, appeased the King, and if Secretary Coke had not dragged Buckingham into the discussion both sides might have been pacified. For the House, however, to be told that a subject—and such a subject—had mediated between them and the Sovereign was a piece of insolence that went far

¹ Gardiner, vol. vi. p. 251.

to counteract the more favourable atmosphere the King's message might have created, and Eliot's protest on the subject was cheered to the echo.

When it came to the debate on billeting, Wentworth, though too practical to deny the soldiers' right to be lodged and fed, wished to insure this by a Bill to regulate the whole system, and as a preliminary persuaded the House to draw up a petition to the King. Hoping to smooth the King's ruffled feelings, he also induced the Commons to accompany this petition by another explaining that grievances took precedence of supply, and that the delay was unintentional. These petitions were duly presented by the Speaker, but without reconciling Charles to their contents.

Meanwhile in the Upper House the royal claim to impose arbitrary imprisonment was, after much argument, submitted to a committee. The Peers awarded the right to commit upon just cause to the King and Council, but hesitated as to whether the cause was to be expressed or not, and the propositions they drafted were no sooner disclosed than they were torn to shreds by the learned lawyers in the Commons. To the phrase, "the royal prerogative intrinsic", and the proposal that the "sovereign power" should be "left entire" which the Lords had inserted in their preamble, Wentworth was as much opposed as Pym or Coke.¹

"If we do admit of this addition", he said, "we shall leave the subject worse than we found him and we shall have little thanks for our labour when we come home. Let us leave all power to His Majesty to punish malefactors, but these laws are not acquainted with "Sovereign Power". We desire no new thing, nor do we offer to trench on His Majesty's prerogative. We may not recede from this petition, either in part, or in whole."

Wentworth, personally, preferred a statute in black and

¹ Cooper, p. 65.

white, reciting the points which should be made clear, beyond any misinterpretation, to a petition which might be scrapped. By attaching a penalty to its violation, the Bill could insure that "none shall be committed without shewing cause". With regard to a real crisis admitting of no delay, like Lord Bristol, who had been a sufferer from Charles's illegal imprisonments, Wentworth, anticipating his later utterances, said boldly that in any "emergent cause", if the King took the law and the responsibility into his hand, he, Wentworth, thought "no man shall find fault with it".¹

This debate took place on April the 26th, and Wentworth carried the House with him. That his plan of campaign had not been hastily conceived is shown by a letter, written some ten days earlier, to Sir Edward Stanhope, his wife's kinsman, outlining the scheme he had laid before Parliament and insisting on the co-operation of King and people—the coping-stone of his creed.

After recapitulating the work of the session he continues:

"The Grand Committee hath voted for 5 subsidies, but are not as yet reported to the House, nor will not I think, at least, by my consent, until we be in something a better readiness for the security of the subjects in these fundamental liberties before rehearsed, for it is resolved by the House that these two, for the King, for the people, shall go hand in hand as our joint and continued act. His Majesty is wondrous well pleased, has sent us a gracious message assuring us he will confirm our liberties and give a gracious answer to our Petition of Right. This latter", characteristically remarks Wentworth, "*I do not so much stand upon, yet I love it as well as another*,"² because I know that if the State be once set on the right foot again, this will necessarily follow in point of State, which for the most part binds strongest with Princes, so as if we get the

¹ Gardiner, vol. vi. p. 262.

² The italics are my own.

former, we have both this and all the rest in which I hope we shall have a very happy Parliament, if God gives us the grace to make use of them as wise men should. Sir, in exceeding haste, I rest your most affectionate, assured Cousin and Friend,

THOMAS WENTWORTH."¹

On April the 29th, Sir Edward Coke submitted to the Grand Committee the law drafted in sub-committee. All recital of grievances was excised from this Bill. Charles's misdoings were not cast up in his face. But he was required to pledge himself never again to billet soldiers without householders' consent, nor to levy loans and taxes without parliamentary authority; while any man he committed to prison was to be bailed or released according to the direction of the judges.

For three whole days the measure was thrashed out, without Wentworth taking any part in the discussion. Then on May the 1st, much as the Leader of the House might nowadays sum up the arguments, he rose, to drive home his final arguments.

"We are here", he said, "to close up the hurt and danger of His Majesty's people. All our desires are but to this Bill; and this left unsecured makes us lose all our labour. . . . We have by this Act a security by Magna Carta and the other laws. Let us make what law we can, there must—nay there will be—a Trust left in the Crown. Let us confirm Magna Carta and those other laws together with the King's declaration by this Act. Let us provide by this law to secure us that we may have no wrong from Westminster. Let it be enacted that we shall be bailed if habeas corpus be brought and no sufficient cause. Such a Law will exceed all the laws that ever we had for the good of the subject."²

The whole scheme was severely practical. For, once

¹ Fitzwilliam MSS.: Wentworth to Sir Edward Stanhope, April 6, 1628.

² Gardiner, vol. vi. pp. 266-7.

habeas corpus writs were freely admitted, the protection of the subject was assured; while the King's prerogative remained amply safeguarded, since the judges, like the bishops, were in close touch with the Monarch and could be depended upon not to let loose men who were a menace to the realm. Moreover, as Mr. Gardiner has pointed out, no one—not Pym, or Selden, or Edward Coke—had as yet run a tilt against the Star Chamber and its extra-judicial powers.

Wentworth had hardly sat down when Secretary Coke appeared, the bearer of a royal message, or rather of a query, as to "whether they would rest on his Royal word and promise". To that query, coupled with the Secretary's declaration that as a Privy Councillor he considered himself entitled to commit without showing cause to any but the King, adjournment was the sole reply.

The next day brought no change in either of the antagonists, though Wentworth still made a gallant effort to bridge the gulf. The King, he said, should be thanked for his gracious message by a House whose main trust was undoubtedly in his "goodness". But he inexorably continued,

"we are ambitious that His Majesty's goodness may remain to posterity, and we are accountable for a public trust; and therefore, seeing that there hath been a public violation of the laws by his ministers, nothing can satisfy them but a public amends; and our desires to vindicate the subjects' right by Bill are no more than are laid down in former laws with some modest provision for illustration, performance or execution".¹

Nevertheless, Wentworth was still prepared to give the King a loophole to escape acknowledging defeat, for he concluded with the remark that the House had not yet agreed to the final wording of the Bill. The King would

¹ Gardiner, vol. vi. p. 269.

only receive it when it had been discussed and perhaps amended in both Houses.

A remonstrance was drawn up on the lines indicated by Wentworth; and on May the 5th it was completed, the King having given warning that on the 13th the Session must come to an end. Throughout the debate, Wentworth stood forward and spoke as the leader of the House. It was, however, the last time he filled that part. Charles would have none of the compromises so ingeniously engineered for him by Wentworth. The King offered to confirm Magna Carta and the Six Statutes "without additions, paraphrases, or explanations".¹ He had given his word, and that, he obstinately insisted, should suffice.

Henceforward, men with far less reverence for the Sovereign than Sir Thomas Wentworth must lead the fight, a grim fight, in which much that Wentworth prized was bound to be sacrificed. Wentworth's leadership of the House of Commons was a thing of the past.

Next followed the drawing up of the Petition of Right, to which the Peers, who had been invited to confer, in the main, signified their agreement.

Charles then began to communicate with the Peers on much the same lines as he had done with the Commons, though he paid the Lords the compliment of advancing arguments on the necessity of vesting a discretionary power in the Crown. Flattered perhaps by this very slight sign of deference, the Upper House responded by drafting an additional clause which spoke of "leaving entire that sovereign power wherewith your Majesty is trusted for the protection, safety, and happiness of your people".

The Commons were not, however, so blind as to swallow an amendment which rather sanctioned than prohibited arbitrary imprisonments, and in this matter Wentworth was at one with the reformers.

¹ Gardiner, vol. vi. p. 270.

"I think", he said, "we all agree we may not admit of this addition. If we do, we shall leave the subject worse off than we found him, and we shall have little thanks for our labours when we come home. I conceive this addition as it is now penned, amounts to a saving, whereas before the law was without a saving. I am resolved not to yield to it."¹

Nevertheless, fearing to antagonise the Upper House, he suggested that a sub-committee should collect the reasons already given, a proposition which the Commons, seeing the wisdom of the course he advocated, promptly endorsed.

The next day the heads of the answers were reported to Grand Committee and a clash occurred between Wentworth and Eliot. Wentworth was willing to back the Petition of Right, but he clung to the constitutional and traditional method of legislation by both Houses, whereas Eliot regarded such a proviso as a reflection on the Commons.

"We are now fallen", said Wentworth, "from a new statute and a new law"—both, it should be remembered, his proposals—"to a Petition of Right, and unless the Lords co-operate with us, the stamp is out of that which gives a value to the action. If they join with us, it is a record to posterity. If we sever from them it is like the grass upon the housetop that is of no long continuance. And therefore let us labour to get the Lords to join with us. To this there are two things considerable, first not to recede in this petition either in part or in whole from our resolutions; secondly that the Lords join with us, else all is lost. We have protested we desire no new thing; we leave all power to His Majesty to punish malefactors. Let us clear ourselves to His Majesty that we thus intend. It is far from me to propound anything"—a curious confession from the man who of all others never shirked

¹ Gardiner, vol. vi. p. 283.

responsibility. He could only suggest that they should again assure the Upper House, that they had no intention to invade the royal prerogative—"but let us add that though we may not admit of this addition, yet if their Lordships can find out any way to keep untouched this petition, we will consider of it and join with them."¹

Though Eliot had nobly subordinated himself to Wentworth's lead during the session, yet the old impression of the Yorkshire baronet of Wentworth probably persisted in his mental background, and now rose again explosively to the surface.

"Sir", Eliot exclaimed, "I cannot make so slight an estimation of the Commons as to make them mere cyphers to nobility. . . . I am confident that should the Lords desert us, we should yet continue flourishing and green",²

and, his anger rising as he spoke, he violently charged his rival with deserting the common cause. It is to be hoped that he felt somewhat ashamed of his hasty onslaught when Wentworth temperately explained that he had merely meant to recall the constitutional fact that unless the Peers joined in the Petition it could not be enrolled among the statutes.

"My proposition", he declared, "is for no moderation, but preserve the petition in the whole or the parts of it. I will never recede from it. Put it not in extremity to have it voted against us. It was wondered I spoke after so long a debate. I have discharged my conscience and delivered it. Do as you please. God that knows my heart, knows that I have studied to preserve this Parliament, as I confess the resolutions of this House in the opinion of wise men stretch very far on the King's power, and if they be kept punctually, will give a blow to Government. The King said that if Government was touched, he was able to protect us; and by this saving indeed is added nothing to him."

¹ Gardiner, vol. vi. pp. 283-4.

² *Idem*, vol. vi. pp. 284-5.

Wentworth's reasoning failed to impress the House; and the Lords were forced to acknowledge that in the face of such opposition they could not insist upon the clause. After much deliberation, on May the 28th they voted the Petition with a rider, inserted for the benefit of the weaker brethren, declaring that they had no intention to nullify the oath of supremacy. So far, so good. But though the fleet had crawled back from La Rochelle, so crippled that without repairs, which could only be effected by parliamentary subsidies, it was vain to expect any of the ships to put again to sea, Charles, desperate as he was, still hesitated to confirm the Petition. The consecrated formula, "*soit droit fait comme est désiré*", which alone could give the Petition the force of law, was just the pledge he would not give. Until then Buckingham and his misdoings had been carefully left out of account by the Opposition. Now, Eliot specifically denounced the foreign policy and the havoc for which its author was responsible. Still, he did not mention Buckingham by name, but it was evident that the remonstrance about to be drawn up was levelled at the Duke. Eliot was Master of the House. The King might order the Commons to abstain from "aspersions" on Ministers, Speaker Finch might support the royal commands—the issue, the true issue, was now before the Commons. The House resolved itself into Committee, and the Speaker, weeping bitterly, departed to attempt to bring home the situation to the King. Men's tongues were loosed. Wentworth moved to go straight to the Sovereign, without requiring the company of the Lords, since they, the Commons, were the King's Counsellors. But his motion was never put, for old Sir Edward Coke, whose tears had at first choked him, now gave utterance to what all felt, but hitherto none had judged it expedient to say. "I think", he cried, "the Duke of Buckingham is the cause of all our miseries, and till the King be informed

thereof, we shall never go out with honour, or sit with honour here. That man is the grievance of grievances. Let us set down the causes of all our disasters, and they will all reflect upon him.”¹ A formal condemnation of Buckingham would have been voted if Charles had not intervened with an order to adjourn. Undoubtedly the majority expected that the next step would be a dissolution. Charles could not, however, stand out against the united front of both Houses; the Lords declined indeed to accede to Lord Bristol’s motion for a Select Committee, to represent the true state of the country to the King, but they charged the Lord Keeper to inform the Sovereign that the Upper House was in complete unison with the Commons.

On June the 7th Charles capitulated, and amid the acclamations of the Commons pronounced the ancient formula which consecrated the Petition as a part of English legislation. In the first round, victory remained with the Commons.

¹ Gardiner, vol. vi. p. 305.

CHAPTER VII

ON May the 28th, in the midst of the throes of the Petition of Right, the Speaker had written to Wentworth:

"I pray God send us good success in our great business to-morrow. No man I know can further advance it than yourself, and I assure myself no man is more willing to see all settled in perfect Peace and Happiness. My part is good wishings only, and that I shall never fail, nor shall I amongst those think them the least that may at any time offer me an opportunity of letting you know how much I am your truly affectionate friend and servant."¹

Finch was not an heroic spirit, but he knew the House, and he voiced the feeling of the members as a whole about Wentworth. Had Charles accepted Wentworth's scheme, he would have obtained easier terms of surrender. But it is just possible that Wentworth would have remained the leader of the House and that English history might have had to be rewritten. It was owing to Charles that Eliot had wrested the leadership from Wentworth, and its transference meant another move forward towards revolution.

Finch was right when he said that no man was more desirous than Wentworth "to see all settled in perfect Peace and Happiness". To that end he was to fight fiercely through the twelve remaining years of life, from beginning to end believing and avowing that this blessed consummation could only be accomplished by the "joint individual

¹ *Letters*, vol. i. p. 46: Speaker to Sir Thomas Wentworth, Gray's Inn, May 28, 1628.

well-being of sovereignty and subjection". With Buckingham at the helm, he realised that there was no prospect of achieving this Elysian vision, and consequently he had whole-heartedly battled for the subject at Westminster. His face was set onwards, yet, while he was leading the patriot band, his feet would fain have kept to the well-trodden tracks. True Wisdom to Wentworth was expressed in his favourite maxim: *stare super antiquas vias*. Forgetting that it owed its success largely to the ruler's genius for identifying herself with her people, the Elizabethan State remained his ideal of the pattern Commonwealth. Charles, who had inherited his father's pedagogic spirit, without any tincture of that pawky Scot's shrewdness, was the embodied contrast of Elizabeth. Hence sprung Wentworth's failure.

As long as he remained leader of the House, strong man though he was, Wentworth was necessarily influenced by his surroundings. If he was the captain, he was also one of a team. Members might be his instruments, but not passive instruments. Removed into another sphere, he became equally concentrated on the work that there offered itself to him—the work of administration which he had always ambitioned, and for which he was pre-eminently fitted. Here, however, decisions devolved comparatively on himself alone; and, whereas in Parliament he was dependent on the agreement of fellow-labourers, in Yorkshire and Ireland he could put through his work almost single-handed. He was not a vain man, but he could not remain unconscious of his own ability. Nor could he escape the urge of his genius. Thus it became a duty to desire more, and ever more, power, since thereby he could command greater efficiency, a smoother working of the machinery of State, and to quote Finch, enable him to "see all settled in perfect Peace and Happiness".

Sir Charles Firth, in his masterly introduction to Browning's *Prose Life of Strafford*,¹ has truly said:

"What really requires explaining is not why Wentworth left the ranks of the Opposition, but how he ever came to act with it. He cannot be termed an apostate, for he renounced no article of faith; much less a convert, for he accepted no new creed. His aim remained the same. He still sought to spend his powers in the fruitful work of practical reform. He still hoped to reconcile King and people. If the Wentworth of 1640 differed from the Wentworth of 1628—and differed for the worse—it was because new duties had brought new conditions; but the change which this influence effected was gradual and unconscious. Neither can it be fairly said that Wentworth left the side of the people, and adopted the side of the King. Nothing misleads so much as the application of the ideas of modern politics to the times before Party Government was born or dreamt of. The first axiom of Wentworth's political creed was that there were not and could not be two sides; and he never saw that what had once been a truth was rapidly becoming a mere phrase."

If Wentworth, though supporting the Petition of Right, had judged its resolutions "in the opinions of wise men to stretch very far on the King's power, and if they be kept punctually to give a blow to Government", much more must he have been out of sympathy with the proceedings of the Commons during the weeks that followed the passing of that momentous Act. The Petition became law on June the 7th; and on the 16th the Subsidy Bill was sent up to the Lords. The Commons considered that they had kept their bargain. Charles, however, after his great sacrifice, felt himself scurvily used since they proceeded with the Remonstrance aimed at the excessive power of Buckingham, they denounced "Arminians"

¹ Robert Browning, *Prose Life of Strafford*, Introduction by C. H. Firth, p. xxiii, London, 1892.

and Arminianism, *i.e.* Laudians and anti-Calvinistic theology, and—in contradiction, it should be remembered, to the judges' decision—made it illegal for the King to collect the customs on tonnage and poundage. It seems pretty clear that tonnage and poundage dues were practically excluded from the category of taxes which Charles had undertaken not to levy. Undoubtedly a wise monarch would have conformed to the spirit of the Petition of Right, rather than have barricaded himself behind the letter of the law. Charles was never wise. But even a prudent ruler of that period, necessarily influenced by the current notions of sovereignty, might have hesitated to dismiss his ministers, to reverse his entire ecclesiastical policy—representing his own reasoned and conscientious beliefs—and at the bidding of the Commons to persecute men who were his staunch supporters, and their creed, which was his creed. By renouncing his right to levy tonnage and poundage, he delivered himself up, he conceived, into the hands of the dictatorial Commons; while of a discretionary power to be husbanded for emergencies not a vestige would remain.

Impatient as Wentworth was of the theological quibbles of "cobblers, bigots and other zealous brethren", as some years earlier he had scornfully designated the Puritans, the violent Jihad that party was now inaugurating in the House must have been profoundly distasteful to him. And in the seventeenth century to differ in matters of dogma was a gulf scarcely to be bridged. The growing difference between him and his late allies was bound to relax their mutual ties. Even in modern politics the process of drifting apart is seldom accomplished without leaving a bitterness in direct ratio to the warmth of former comradeship. At that period, when the equivalent of our vote of "no confidence" was frequently the scaffold and the block, it was far greater. It must have been galling to

Wentworth, immediately on the revelation of his gifts of leadership and constructive statesmanship, to be reduced to powerlessness by extremists. To remain content in a state of detachment can only be achieved by the saint or the invertebrate. Wentworth was neither. Moreover, he may well have considered that with the passing of the Petition he had fulfilled his obligations to the reforming party. He was free to seize on the best opportunity that presented itself for service to the Commonwealth. When, at this juncture, the offer of a peerage supervened, the wonder would have been that he should refuse to avail himself of this fresh means to his end. There is such a thing—to use a modern epithet—as a Liberal-Conservative mentality. It is the type of intellect specially appropriate to an Assembly of Elder Statesmen. Though later identified with far other conceptions, in his present phase Wentworth more nearly represented that mental attitude than most of his fellow-members on either side of the House of Commons, whereas in the House of Lords he would find many distinguished men in agreement with his views. The Upper House of that era, moreover, was acknowledged as the Great Council of the Sovereign, and many peers besides Lords Bristol and Arundel had recently shown that they could fearlessly discharge their office.

Browning rightly says “that much good wrath is thrown away upon what is usually called apostasy”.¹ Certainly this has been the case with regard to Wentworth. Nevertheless the tremendous wrath his secession excited gives the truest measure of the value set by his former followers on the lost leader; and nothing better illustrates this than the well-known tale, whether true or apocryphal, of the parting between Pym and Wentworth.

If we are to believe Dr. James Welwood, there had been

¹ *Prose Life of Strafford*, p. 61.

"a long and intimate friendship between Wentworth and Pym",¹ culminating in their joint labours during the past session. No correspondence confirming this statement has survived, but it is quite possible that the two men were well acquainted. In 1607 Wentworth was entered in the Inner Temple and Pym in the Middle Temple, and during the eight years that Wentworth sedulously attended the Law Courts they may have had many opportunities of meeting one another. Again, in the Parliaments of 1621 and 1624 they must frequently have been in contact. With Eliot, Wentworth had fallen out more than once, but there is no trace of differences between him and Pym during the memorable session devoted to the Petition of Right. Welwood continues:

"When Sir Thomas was upon making his peace with the Court, he sent to Pym to meet him alone at Greenwich; where he began in a set speech to sound Mr. Pym about the dangers they were like to run by the courses they were in; and what advantages they might have if they would but listen to some offers which would probably be made them from the Court. Pym, understanding his speech, stopped him short with this expression: 'you need not use all this art to tell me you have a mind to leave us; but remember what I tell you, you are going to be undone. But remember that though you leave us now, I will never leave you while your head is upon your shoulders.'"

It must be remembered that Dr. James Welwood, the purveyor of this dramatic episode, was William III.'s physician, and the author of a *Vindication of the* (1688) *Revolution in England*, and as anxious to put the best speeches into the mouths of the Whigs as Dr. Johnson was to do the reverse.

It is quite possible that the two great Parliamentarians

¹ *Memoirs of the most material transactions in England during the last hundred years preceding the Revolution of 1688*, by Dr. James Welwood, pp. 44-5.

did meet at Greenwich, and that Wentworth may have attempted to induce Pym to join forces with him. But Wentworth was not the man to emphasise the personal risks to be encountered in a particular line of conduct, nor so short-sighted as to emphasise them to Pym, who he must have realised was as fearless as himself. He may have warned Pym against the dangers of the Opposition courses; for as he saw them the dangers were mainly those which threatened the State from the extreme wing of Pym's party. Nor were office and power unworthy considerations. Elizabeth had been a great sovereign, but she owed much to her ministers. Wentworth had no illusions as to the official gang who surrounded Charles. His illusion regarded the character of the King, who, in truth, was far less influenced by Buckingham than the world imagined. It would only have been natural if Wentworth had thought that the situation could be retrieved by the introduction into the ministry of one of the ablest men in the House. At a later period, as we know from Lord Clarendon, Charles meditated giving office to Pym and other members of the Opposition, and there is little doubt that, had the offer been made, it would have been accepted.

It is easy to see how an episode of this kind can be distorted when presented by a prejudiced writer. Until recently, however, until the error was exposed by Mr. Gardiner, a mistaken date of the devoted Radcliffe loaded the dice far more heavily against the "Great Apostate". Radcliffe asserted that the new peer became a Privy Councillor at Michaelmas 1628, that is to say, four short months after the passing of the Petition of Right, while Charles's foreign policy, to which he was strenuously opposed, remained in force. As a matter of fact, Wentworth became a Privy Councillor only on November the 10th, 1629, more than a year after his peerage, and more than a year

after Felton's "poore tenpenny knife" had removed Buckingham, "that grievance of grievances".

If the Privy Councillorship, carrying as it did something akin to Cabinet rank, was still,¹ however, comparatively remote, already in August gossip was busying itself with the prospects of further promotion for Wentworth. It was reported that if the actual President of the North, Lord Sunderland, died, Wentworth would be his successor. Undoubtedly in 1625 Wentworth had begged Lord Conway to sound the Duke of Buckingham on that very subject. Even under Buckingham it must have seemed an eminently desirable office to Wentworth, since, in addition to Yorkshire being his home, its very distance from Whitehall afforded a safeguard against meddlesome interference with his administrative work. The advantages of the position were tenfold increased with the removal of Buckingham. Consequently Wentworth can have had little hesitation in accepting the offer when it was definitely made, and on December the 15th his patent for the Presidency was duly signed and sealed. Doubtless with a view to increasing the dignity of the future Lord President, on the preceding December 10th Wentworth's barony was advanced to a viscounty. The "high ceremony" of the investiture was carried out at Whitehall, and with such pomp that ill-natured critics remarked that the "Duke of Buckingham himself flew not so high in so short a revolution of time".²

"High ceremonies" were the very life-blood of existence as it was understood in the seventeenth century, and, like Napoleon, Wentworth fully realised the effect they were bound to produce on the audiences of that, or, we may say, of any period, if properly stage-managed. The Lord President of the North was practically the viceroy

¹ *Howell's Familiar Letters*, edited by J. Jacobs, vol. i. p. 269: Howell to Countess of Sunderland.

² *Epistolae Howellianae*, p. 34.

of the Northern Counties, and both at York and Dublin Wentworth's Court was noted for its splendour.

The outward and visible signs of power were at all times, however, very secondary considerations to Wentworth, and he was now mainly absorbed in obtaining definite instructions to strengthen his hands and enable him to make his rule efficient. Indeed, he refused to accept the Presidency unless he secured these explicit and additional instructions to enable him to grapple with the situation which confronted him at York.

To understand aright that situation and the policy it forced upon Wentworth is only possible in the light of the history of the Council of the North, so ably elucidated by Miss Rachel Reid. The foundations of the Tribunal were laid in the Council of Richard Duke of York, it lapsed for a time under Henry VII., and was re-established in 1537 by Henry VIII. England south and north of the Trent were two distinct countries; and Henry's twin objects, "the quietness and good governance of the people", and "the speedy and indifferent administration of justice between party and party", were more nearly attained after than before the creation of the Council.¹

The Council consisted of the Lord President (who had at first an absolute power of veto, later whittled down to a casting vote), Councillors, and a Secretary. A Master in Chancery was invariably present at the sittings, and four annual sessions were made obligatory. The Council's rule extended over Yorkshire, Northumberland, Cumberland, Westmorland, Durham, York, Kingston-upon-Hull, and Newcastle-upon-Tyne. The commission of Oyer and Terminer, under the Great Seal, which was their warrant, contained a clause enabling them to hear all causes real and personal; while the "instructions" which amplified and expounded their commission further ordained that

¹ Rachel Reid, *Council of the North*, p. 5.

though there was to be no appeal from the Court of York, yet, should an important suit turn on legal questions and on fact to the King in Council, it might be referred to the Courts at Westminster.¹

As time passed, and the Justices of the Peace acquired more authority, the Council became rather legal than administrative. The fact that either the Lord President or the Vice-President and at least one legal member of the Board were bound to be in residence at York both during term and vacation brought them a large amount of business. The composition of the Board proved singularly felicitous. As Miss Reid points out, the presence of laymen protected suitors against the

“precision and inflexibility from which the Common Law Courts were struggling to escape . . . and the equitable character of the Law administered by the Court at York was secured at the same time that the influence of the lawyers reduced the practice of the Court to order, and safeguarded suitors from capricious decisions”.²

With the enactment of the penal laws against recusants and the many ecclesiastical cases, the labours of the Commission were increased so that the Court of York became eventually a High Commission Court for the Northern Province. The justice administered was, on the whole, sound, benefiting as it did from the admixture of professional and lay members. It was also cheaper than the ordinary Courts of Law, a strict rule being laid down in the matter of fees. It could generally get its decisions obeyed, and it protected witnesses from the intimidation which, in certain localities, reduced jury verdicts to sheer mockery. Westminster being distant, it put justice within the reach of the poor, a privilege of which they were not slow to avail themselves. When, however, suitors knew

¹ Rachel Reid, *Council of the North*, pp. 188-9.

² *Idem*, p. 250.

that the adverse party could not afford the expense of actions being carried up to Westminster, "injunctions" and "prohibitions" against the Council's verdict multiplied—to the satisfaction of judges and common law barristers, who resented such a large volume of profitable work being withdrawn from them. Despite "instructions", it was also uncertain whether the Council's writ ran outside its boundaries, thus making its jurisdiction contemptible if its verdicts could be evaded by merely crossing from one county to another. Wentworth was consequently resolved that the original "instructions", the charters of successive Presidents, should be so strengthened as to make the Justice of the Court proof against all intrigues and tricks devised by powerful suitors and assisted by the envious tactics of the Statute Courts.

Between 1625 and 1628 the administration of the Council nominally exercised by Lord Sunderland had been largely inspired by Sir John Savile, the Vice-President, a promoter of monopolies, the patron of his neighbours the clothiers, whom he abetted in proceedings which brought discredit on British goods. Savile was deeply tainted with that corruption which was the canker of contemporary official life, and, according to Wentworth, received large bribes from recusants to arrange their compositions. As long as Buckingham lived he was safe; when the Duke died his day of power was brief.¹ His dismissal from the posts of Vice-President and Receiver of the Recusants' Compositions anticipated Sunderland's loss of the Presidency; and though Savile's dismissal was sweetened by a peerage, the same day he was made a baron his rival became a viscount. In the long duel between the two men, Wentworth had won the second round, and he had won mainly because it was becoming clear that he possessed both integrity and courage to reform abuses.

¹ Rachel Reid, *Council of the North*, pp. 402-3.

Indeed, Wentworth was so convinced of his own unimpeachable integrity that he did not believe that his judgements could be reasonably challenged; and undoubtedly few statesmen of that epoch shared his determination to champion the cause of the poor and needy. Thus one of his first reforms was the reduction of the clerks' fees, which had been increasing by leaps and bounds. It was therefore mainly with the object of achieving justice between man and man, independently of wealth or position, that he pressed for fuller and more detailed powers; mainly, but not entirely, for when he accepted office he realised that he was expected to tighten the stranglehold on Catholic recusants, the single subject on which Charles and his Protestant Commons were at unison. Hitherto, Lord Sunderland had levied very moderate recusancy prices. Wentworth was ready, for unfortunately he shared the almost universal views of his generation on the subject, to impose conformity, and he had no intention of allowing Henrietta Maria and her party to undermine his work. He was further resolved that bargains made with recusants should be scrupulously observed; and consequently that decisions in matters both ecclesiastical and secular given at York should not be upset at Westminster.

Yet it must not be thought, as the earlier nineteenth-century historians would have us believe, that Wentworth started for York with the fixed determination to introduce despotism among "the good northern people". Efficient administration, the protection of the poor, the imposition of proper recusancy fines, the advancement of the Commonwealth, these were his considered aims. As time went by, and his sense of responsibility as an administrator increased, that snare of the strong man, the desire to cut Gordian knots, became a self-evident duty. Most capable organisers have, privately at least, groaned over the

necessity of wasting time in discussing business with their committees. Wentworth did not groan; he acted according to the dictates of his reason—thereby antagonising the ordinary mortal, whom, with a little more trouble, he might have carried along with him.

Meanwhile there was unfeigned joy amongst Wentworth's friends and relations at his securing high office.

"You tell me", writes Wandesford, "God hath blessed you much in these late proceedings. Truly, I believe it, for by these circumstances we know, we may guess at them we know not. The opportunity of this Succession adds no small comfort to the Thing itself. Your Predecessor, like that Candle hid under a bushel, while he lived in this Place, darkened himself and all about him and dieth towards us (excuse me for the Phrase) like a Snuff unmannerly left in a Corner. But I hope you will place yourself in the midst among us to be a Light and Comfort to the whole County; not to all neither", writes the stout Protestant, "for the Papists already hang down their heads like bulrushes, and think themselves like Water spilt upon the ground, which cannot be gathered up again; they say plainly their days of security and Quietness in which they were lulled asleep by the indulgence of the last, must now be turned into anxiety and watchfulness to defend themselves from the vigilancy of your justice. It is well, let them talk and have cause to talk . . . and as you have amongst them whereupon to exercise your Authority and discipline so you will not want other fit objects for your nobleness and courtesies. For I know you are resolved now (seeing she hath followed you so far home as she can, even to the very mark) to stifle the Breath of Envy which hath been always blown strongly against you and, like the Bees over the Cradle of Plato, hung over your actions ever since I was acquainted with them."¹

Wandesford's letter was written at Christmas, and on

¹ *Letters*, vol. i. p. 49: Wandesford to Lord President, Kirklington, December 29, 1628.

December the 30th Wentworth arrived in York to assume the Government. Since a High Sheriff, on ceremonial occasions, was escorted by three hundred persons, the preparations for the Lord President's state entry should not, according to Wandesford, "be shortened with regard to that Honour which belongs to yourself and the Place upon your first reception". But Wentworth's joy at being reunited to his old friends brooked no delay; and stately as was his oration, which indeed comprises his confession of faith, it is in a refreshingly human fashion that the Yorkshireman's satisfaction breaks forth at being once more in his own county and with his own folk.

"Without any shadow or light of art", he says, "I must set forth myself before you this day for the most obliged man in the world, an evident, a manifest truth, my testimonies are your own great trusts." (His former constituents formed part of his audience.) "We frequently communicated in diverse Parliaments; your chearful affections enlarged not present alone, but in my confinement—in a degree exile—when I was as infection to others, you vouchsafed to take me again into your bosoms. What confidence greater? Or what affection warmer? But cast the free bounties of my Gracious Master into the other scale? There weigh me, within the space of one year, a bird, a wandering bird cast out of the nest, a prisoner, planted here again in my own soil amongst the companions of my youth; my house honoured, myself entrusted with the rich dispensation of a sovereign goodness, nay assured of all these before I asked, before I thought of any. Tell me was there ever such over measure? The like credit given to so weak a debtor? Baulked indeed before I begin, owing more both to king and people than I shall ever be able to repay to either. *Yet to the joint well-being of Sovereignty and subjection do I here vow all my cares and diligences through the whole course of this my ministry.* I confess I am not ignorant how some distempered minds have of late very far endeavoured to divide the considerations of the

two; as if their end were distinct, not the same, nay in opposition; a monstrous, a prodigious birth of a licentious conception; for so we should become all head or all members. But God be praised, human wisdom, common experience, Christian religion teach us far otherwise.”¹

Then coming to his confession of faith, he continues:

“Princes are to be indulgent, nursing fathers to their people; their modest liberties, their sober rights ought to be precious in their eyes, the branches of their government be for shadow, for habitation, the comfort of life, repose, safe and still under the protection of their sceptres. Subjects on the other side, ought with solicitous eyes of jealousy to watch over the prerogatives of the Crown; the authority of a King is the keystone which closeth up the arch of order and government, which contains each part in due relation to the whole and which once shaken, infirmed all the frame falls together into a confused heap of foundation and battlement, of strength and beauty. Furthermore, subjects must lay down their lives for the defence of Kings freely, till those offer out of their store freely like our best grounds *Qui majore ubertate gratiam quietis referre solent*.

“Verily these are those mutual intelligences of love and protection descending, and loyalty ascending which should pass, be the entertainments between a king and his people. Their faithful servants must look equally on both, weare, twist these two together in all their counsells, study, labour to preserve each without diminishing or enlarging either, and by running in the worn wonted channels, treading the ancient bounds, cut off early all disputes from betwixt them. For whatever he be which ravells forth into questions the right of a King and of a People, shall never be able to wrap them up again into the comeliness and order he found them.”

It is interesting to compare Wentworth's and Pym's picture of the ideal commonwealth. At first sight they do not appear greatly to differ.

¹ Browning, *Prose Life of Strafford*, App. ii. pp. 291-6, December 1628.

"The best form of Government", said Pym, "is that which doth actuate and dispose every part and member of a state to the common good; and as those parts give strength and ornament to the whole, so they receive from it again strength and protection in their several stations and degrees. If this mutual relation and intercourse be broken, the whole frame will quickly be dissolved and fall in pieces; and instead of this concord and interchange of support, whilst one part seeks to uphold the old form of Government, and the other part to introduce a new, they will miserably consume and devour one another."¹

So far Pym preaches the same gospel as Wentworth. But where Wentworth insists that the running should be "in the worn, wonted channels, treading the ancient bounds", Pym allows—though apologetically—that "Time must needs bring about alterations and every alteration is a step and degree towards a dissolution". His conclusion does not, however, diverge widely from the Lord President's, for if he believes those Commonwealths have "been most durable and perpetual which have often reformed and recomposed themselves", it must "yet be according to their first institution and ordinance, for by this means they repair the breaches and counter work the ordinary and natural effects of time".

When idealistic philosophy was, however, displaced by stern practical realities the radical difference between the two men's outlook was soon apparent. Even at so early a stage, Pym would not have held the prohibitions issuing from the Courts at Westminster to be the "bleeding evil" threatening justice in the Northern Province. He might not have quarrelled with Wentworth's "first" rule for remedying so alarming a state of things, since that first rule was "to assume nothing to ourselves but what is our own" and, moreover, to appeal to "those of the fee" for

¹ Gardiner, vol. vi. p. 313.

guidance. The second rule is, however, more suggestive of "thorow", not alone embracing "a square courage to our proceedings", but also a resolve not to "give off upon prohibitions till the suitor hath the fruit of his plaint". Finally, though possessing proper reverence for the law, as became the descendant of a Chief Justice, he gave fair warning that, acting on His Majesty's instructions, he had no intention of allowing his Court's decisions to be overridden by any tribunal.

"May the tent of this Court", piously exclaimed the Lord President, "be enlarged, the curtains drawn out, the stakes strengthened, yet no further than shall be for a covering to the common tranquillity and shelter to the poor and innocent from the proud and insolent."

To this end, he added:

"I not only profess my entire filial obedience to the Church, but also covet a sound, a close conjunction with the grave, the reverend Clergy that they to us, we to them may as twins administer help to each other."

Thus, Papists and Puritans had their warning. But indeed so also had the band of "escheators, Feodaries, Under Sheriffs, Clerks of the Market, Attornies, Registrars, Bailiffs, and such like, which snatch on the right hand and are hungry, eat on the left and are not satisfied". Mr. Attorney, "the eye of the Court", was not to lose sight of this motley crew and to treat them as "nettles which gently touched, bite, taken up with a closer hand, lose their venom".

Thus laity, clergy, Justices of the Peace and Mr. Attorney were shown the places they were one and all to fill in that arch of which the Sovereign was the keystone. Nor as regards himself was the Lord President chary of promising his utmost endeavour to forward that harmonious whole.

"I do here offer myself", he declared, "an instrument for good in every man's hand, he that thus useth me most hath the most of my heart, even to the meanest man within the whole jurisdiction."

Brave words and true, for Wentworth ever strove to shelter "the poor and innocent".

The pity was that the sense of his own devotion to the Commonwealth, his reforming zeal, and his consciousness of efficiency would make him increasingly impatient of those whose ways were not his ways, whose thoughts were not his thoughts. Almost automatically his opponents would appear the "wanton gallants that always fly upon the superior powers that are next them", against whom, on his initiation to high office, he solemnly warned his good countrymen.

CHAPTER VIII

DURING the next few months Wentworth appears to have taken little part in political affairs outside his own province. In the spring of 1629 he did, however, attend Parliament and must have witnessed the events which culminated in an open breach between the King and Wentworth's late associates in the Commons. The history of these quarrels is too well known to require repetition. If Charles had possessed a modicum of tact or, indeed, of wisdom he might have made a bargain with the Commons over the vexed questions of tonnage and poundage and secured his subsidies. With regard to the miscalled subject of religion, compromise was undoubtedly more difficult; though there could be no hope of peace when Charles deliberately promoted the very clerics the Commons had singled out for condemnation. To Wentworth such debates must have seemed a tragic waste of opportunities, since at no period had he any sympathy with the House's attempt to resolve itself into a tribunal of doctrine.

Neither can he have approved their action in summoning Customs officials to the bar to answer for their having attached a merchant member's goods. He would have seen in it an attempt to transfer authority from royal warrants to parliamentary warrants—a weakening of the executive which as a practical statesman he dreaded. Thus the whole trend of the Opposition was to drive a wedge ever deeper between Wentworth and his former allies. The fact that it was his brother-in-law, Denzil Holles, who

took the leading part in holding the reluctant Speaker down in his chair while the House voted the famous Resolution in answer to Charles's order for adjournment, cannot have reconciled him to the Parliament's last act. If so stout a Puritan as Sir Symonds d'Ewes considered that in "the carriage of the breach, which led to the most unhappy dissolution, divers fiery spirits in the House of Commons were very faulty and cannot be excused",¹ we may be sure that Wentworth would not have absolved his nearest and dearest for their share in the tumult.

On March 10 Charles dissolved Parliament, and his eleven years of personal rule began with the imprisonment of Holles, Eliot, Selden, and five others for their part in the adjournment and for refusing to recognise the power of the Courts over Parliament. The King devoted much ingenuity to punishing them without violating the letter of his pledge on the Petition of Right. As we all know, Eliot died in the Tower, a martyr to his convictions. Holles was not set free until 1630.

After the dissolution of Parliament, on his return to Yorkshire, it is probable that Wentworth carried down with him "instructions" to fortify the jurisdiction of the Council of the North—the instructions which were to figure so largely in his impeachment. For Lord Conway, President of the Privy Council, writing to Heath, the Attorney-General, informs him that if the instructions do not bestow on the Lord President and Council of the North the same powers enjoyed by other Courts with regard to such matters as ratings, bails, privileges of witnesses, habeas corpus, or

"if anything had been omitted out of the said Commission (to the Lord President) or Instructions which doth in any sort derogate from the Lord President and Council there, whom His Majesty intendeth to continue in such honour-

¹ D'Ewes, *Autobiography*, vol. i. p. 321.



By Sir Anthony Van Dyke

CHARLES I.

The portrait presented by Charles I. to Archbishop Laud

(From the collection of His Grace the Archbishop of Canterbury at Lambeth Palace)

able manner as hath been heretofore . . . and it were requisite to make any new additions or explanations to the said Instructions, Heath was to certify it to the King who would take such further order as shall be requisite".¹

Plenty of work, even without the additional labours which his extended powers might entail, awaited Wentworth at York. The Long Parliament's denunciations of the tyrannies perpetrated by special and extra-judicial tribunals have created a prejudice against them which is only gradually being effaced by the meticulous historical research of late years. In passing judgement we should never forget that paternal government was regarded as that of the pattern State in the seventeenth century. The Courts of High Commission, Star Chamber, Council of the North were modelled on these lines. They disposed quickly and cheaply of suits which might have run for years in Chancery and the King's Bench, and they generally steered clear of the jealousies which terrorised local juries.² As to the fines, enormous as they appear, they were more often imposed to convey a sense of the heinousness of the offence than actually collected. Had these Courts been otherwise than honest and expeditious, it is scarcely conceivable that 95 per cent of the suits voluntarily evoked before them would not have been carried before other judges. Considering the difficulties of travel, it was no lame excuse on Wentworth's part to claim that the "heap of small suits" might be more cheaply settled in the province.³ Nor was he speaking less than the exact truth when he alleged his reverence for the Law. The great Lord Chief Justice Gascoigne, from whom he prided himself to descend, could not have been filled with a more burning desire to execute strict justice, and to protect the

¹ *S.P. Dom. Charles I.*, vol. iii. pp. 628-9: Lord Conway to Attorney-General, May 18, 1629.

² Usher, *Rise and Fall of the High Commission*, p. 324.

³ *Idem*, p. 323.

“poor, mean man” than his latest descendant. Besides the cursory acquaintance with legal procedure generally included in a gentleman’s education, during the eight years he had watched over his nephew’s law suits Wentworth had not only added to his knowledge on the subject, but had probably acquired a distaste for the dilatory and inflexible practices of the Common Law in that age. It was consequently reason no less than his natural instincts that made him desire to have his powers as President strengthened.

A question which admitted of no delay in the opinion of King and Parliament was the treatment of recusants. In Lancashire and the northern counties generally, where the Pilgrimage of Grace and the revolt of the Earls had more nearly imperilled the Governments of Henry VIII. and Elizabeth than any other internal troubles, Roman Catholicism was dying hard. Lord Sunderland had been content practically to leave the recusants alone, while in the last years the advent of a Catholic consort had raised their hopes. Parliament was the Papists’ worst enemy, and doubtless many a squire and yeoman in the north would have congratulated himself on the open breach between the Commons and the Sovereign had it not been coupled with the announcement that Wentworth was to be their ruler. As Wandesford told him, on the mere receipt of that news, “they were hanging their heads like bulrushes” and were “water spilt upon the ground”. The metaphor if mixed is none the less forcible. Probably when Wentworth sat in the Council of the North, they obtained an intimation of his policy, and realised that King Log was to give place to King Stork. And, indeed, Wentworth’s conception of the State was a State at unity in itself, and with him unity meant uniformity.

If, however, Wentworth was a strict administrator, once a bargain was made he insisted on its observance. His

anger blazed forth when he discovered that in his absence pursuivants and justices were terrorising the Romanists. No man, were he squire or Bishop Palatine, was suffered to molest those to whom he had pledged the royal word. Thus, from Ireland, he wrote to Laud, in 1633, that the Bishop of Durham was misled by some busybody who declared that Popery was on the increase,

“for there is nothing more sure that Popery hath not been increased in those parts by reason of the composition. They, the Recusants, did the same things they do now, but then ye Clerk of the Assize, ye Clerk of the Peace, ye Judge, his Marshall in a circuit, and your zealous pragmatique Justice fetched ever and anon a fleece from them, not one third of that which now comes to the Crown, but that is not the matter, they had something, now they have nothing; and now afraid to lose the making of those silver shrines they thus cry out ‘Great is Diana of the Ephesians’. And good man (as Caiaphas that prophesied and knew not) they make him unawares to speak their indirect underhand gains, when he conceives he utters the zeale he owes the Church of Christ.”¹

That Wentworth lost no time in regulating these same compositions is evident, since in August Cottington was ordered to acknowledge a letter sent by Wentworth to the King to justify his proceedings with the recusants. This letter, according to Cottington, had not merely earned a “notable approbation”, but Charles promised to write with his own hand to Wentworth, “for you are his mistress”, said Cottington, “and must be cherished and courted at all times”.² These were unusually gracious words. To Wentworth, they must have been specially welcome, since he was too shrewd not to recognise that it was with the power behind the throne, that of the wife and queen, that he must reckon. As he wrote to Laud at a later period, it

¹ Fitzwilliam MSS.: Wentworth to Laud, March 7, 1633.

² *Letters*, vol. i. p. 51: Cottington to Wentworth, August 5, 1629.

was a great mistake that Charles allowed Henrietta Maria to meddle with public affairs, but it was one of the facts that had to be faced. For all his own integrity, Wentworth was no purist about morals that could not be mended.¹ So he took care that the Queen should receive £500, the sum being conveyed through Henry Percy, to prevent its being traced to the Lord Deputy. If it had to come out of Wentworth's purse, it was preferable—in his eyes—to allowing the Queen to grab the poor clergy's tithes or impropriations, which would have stultified his ecclesiastical reforms in Ireland.

From a list of compositions that has survived, recusants were assessed, roughly speaking, at 10 per cent, and, naturally, efforts were made to upset Wentworth's decisions.² In particular he complained bitterly of a paper circulated by a Catholic, who declared that he had it, on the Attorney-General's authority, that the Northern Commission was merely a sub-commission to that in the south.³ As Wentworth pointed out, recusants preferred to appeal to the Southern Commission, where their estimates of lands and revenues could not be so easily checked as in their own neighbourhood. Thus to quote one instance—and that was no solitary case—a certain Mr. Gascoigne of Barnbow, who had compounded with Lord Savile for £100 per annum, when he got south was let off with £60 a year. If, said Wentworth, recusants might have "that back set to chop up and compound", he would instantly resign from the Commission.

Since funds were a crying necessity, this practical argument did not fall on deaf ears at Whitehall. The last thing that Charles desired was to lose his efficient President, and already in June the King had made it clear that the Council

¹ Fitzwilliam MSS.: Wentworth to Laud.

² *S.P. Dom. Charles I.*, vol. iv. p. 428.

³ *Idem*, vol. iv. p. 35: Wentworth to Attorney-General, August 22, 1629.

of the North was not to be treated as a subordinate Court. He then informed Wentworth—in words that might have been dictated by the latter—that it was the “too frequent granting of prohibitions forth of our Courts of Common Law in Westminster much more than in former times have either been permitted or practised” which had the result of “disappointing our subjects of their suits”.¹ Further, it was his “princely pleasure that we will not have our Courts of Justice thus to clash one with another”. Should a question of jurisdiction have to be decided, he himself would hear and judge equally between them; and in March of the following year the compositions of recusants were evidently allotted to Wentworth’s final decisions.²

Shortly after his threat to throw up his post if the recusants were allowed a “back set to chop up”, Wentworth seems to have returned to London, for he was certainly there in November, as we know by his action in a curious matter.

Many years previously, in 1614, Leicester’s son, Duke Dudley, then settled in great pomp at Florence, but perpetually intriguing to recover his position in England, thought he could ingratiate himself with James I. by suggesting a means which would enable the King to make himself absolute. Dudley urged James to bridle the “impertinency of Parliament” by establishing throughout the country a cordon of military fortresses garrisoned by mercenaries, under whose aegis he could levy taxes.³ Through Sir David Foulis and Somerset, the prime favourite of the hour, this document was delivered into the Monarch’s hands.

Mercenaries and fortresses were never the chosen pawns

¹ *S.P. Dom. Charles I.*, vol. iii. p. 588: King to Lord President of the North, June 22, 1629.

² *Idem*, vol. iv. p. 218: King to Bishop (Bridgeman) of Chester, March 30.

³ Gardiner, vol. vii. pp. 138-9.

of James's chessboard, and he would have nothing to do with a proposal which could only have been conceived by an Italianate Englishman. Somehow or other, however, the discarded paper found its way into Sir Robert Cotton's library, and in 1629, when Parliamentary troubles were at their height, his librarian, Richard James, lent it, for a consideration, to Oliver St. John, then at the outset of his career. St. John's copy filtered through various hands, including again Somerset's, until it reached Wentworth's father-in-law. He returned it to Cotton, who, strange to say, regarded the copy as an original, having apparently either never realised, or forgotten, that the latter was pigeon-holed among his treasures. Indeed, he set himself to answer its arguments, but before he could do so an unfaithful amanuensis in his employment, like James before him, began trafficking in copies, one of which eventually reached Wentworth. Such a scheme was bound to excite Wentworth's wrath, for it proposed to leave the "worn, wonted channels" of Government, and to "ravell forth the rights of a King and People". In fact, as Mr. Gardiner points out, "there was just the resemblance between the course thus recommended and the constitutional position assumed by Wentworth to rouse his resentment at so gross a caricature of his principles".¹ On November the 5th, the anniversary of Guy Fawkes' Plot, Wentworth carried the paper to Charles, who received it with unsimulated indignation, declaring at the Privy Council that the proposals "were fitter to be practised in a Turkish State than among Christians". Moreover, he did more than protest, for to mark his gratitude for Wentworth's action, which gave him the opportunity to repudiate such intentions, he made him a Privy Councillor.

Wentworth's appointment to the Privy Council was undoubtedly an event big with consequences not only to

¹ Gardiner, vol. vii. p. 138.



Sir Anthony Vandyke pinxit

Emery Walker Ltd. ph. sc.

Lady Arabella Holles, Viscountess Wentworth
2nd wife of Viscount Wentworth.
from the collection of Earl Fitzwilliam at Wentworth Woodhouse

himself but to the country. Indeed, there is ground for the belief that his accession to the Privy Council was not unconnected with that series of measures intended to benefit the people in general, and in particular to shield the helpless members of the community from oppression.¹ And recent investigations of the Poor Law have certainly confirmed that surmise.

The Elizabethan Statute of 1597 laid the foundations of compulsory relief for the poor.² Houses of correction, or work provided by the parishes for the able-bodied unemployed, were then instituted; in both cases frequently accompanied by the teaching of a trade, while pensions were provided for the impotent. Under James I. this law was amended and strengthened, and in its main lines has endured unto this day.

In all social legislation, as Miss Leonard points out, the difficulty lies rather in administration than in statute law. Under Charles I.'s personal rule it was the action of the Privy Council that carried weight. The failure of the corn harvest in 1630, coupled with the depression of trade, combined to produce a situation which called for Government intervention. The "Book of Orders" addressed to the justices by the Privy Council at this juncture shows how close was the supervision exercised by the Cabinet Committee—as we should now call it—consisting of Wentworth, Laud, Abbot, and Dorchester.³ The warrant appointing them to be Commissioners commands them to inquire into the execution of laws concerning the relief of the poor, the finding of apprentices, the setting to work of poor people, the compelling the lazy to work, the maintenance of houses of correction, payments for relief of soldiers and mariners, punishment of rogues and vaga-

¹ Gardiner, vol. vii. p. 160.

² G. K. Leonard, *Early History of Poor Law Relief*, vol. ix. p. 294.

³ *Cal. S.P. Dom. Charles I.*, vol. iv. p. 474, Warrant Commission, January 5, 1631.

bonds, the repression of drunkenness, keeping watch and ward . . . and other public services for God, the King, and the Commonwealth. As a result, the justices were enjoined to interfere on behalf of the poor "that His Majesty and the Board may not be troubled with any complaint for want of due executions of statutes 5 Elizabeth and 1 James".

It should be added that the Privy Council was not regarded solely as a Nemesis to be invoked in dire need. The justices were ordered to make a practice of special meetings to report to their Lordships, and thanks to these reports, which have survived, we know that over and above the work to be found for the unemployed—for St. Paul's stern maxim was then held in universal honour—in certain districts sums were levied to provide tools and materials for their use, while the helpless were pensioned and youthful paupers were apprenticed. It is interesting to note, as Miss Leonard points out, that the first thorough execution of the Poor Law may be dated from Charles's personal Government, and, moreover, that a more "complete organisation for the help of the weaker classes than at any other period of our history" was then inaugurated. Such an organisation reflects Wentworth's ideal of "the branches of Government to be for shadow, for habitation, the comfort of life, repose safe and still under the protection of their (prince's) sceptres". He may well have thought that in this department of Government he was fulfilling his "vow" to dedicate all his cares and diligences "to the joint well-being of sovereignty and subjection".

A well-organised Poor Law has never been a cheap Poor Law. Partly owing to circumstances and partly owing to his own intrinsic qualities, Wentworth had been the recognised leader of the country gentlemen. It was to him that the sheepmasters had looked; while the clothiers, or manufacturers, depended on Savile. But it was on the landed gentry that the burden of providing the money to

satisfy the Book of Orders mainly devolved; and at last a Governor was in the saddle who would allow no claims of kinship, neighbourhood, or friendship to deflect his judgements. Money is the acid test of popularity. Wentworth grew to be disliked by his former allies, without gaining the affections of the industrial classes, since he was equally inflexible when it came to carrying out the regulations governing industry. It is true that trade greatly improved after Wentworth rooted out delinquents and abuses. No reformer in any age, however, has been popular, and the only class who owed something approaching ease to his actions were speechless, and even they, save in the Court at York, may not have realised to whom they owed deliverance from a thousand petty oppressions and grinding cares.

Lord Savile, stripped of his Receivership of recusants' fines and of his post as Vice-President of the Council, went down to Yorkshire, says Clarendon, "a most abject, a disconsolate old man".¹ Nor did he long survive his disgrace. But his son, the second Lord, remained to carry on the vendetta, as Strafford was to find to his cost in 1641. After the exposure of the head of the family, it is true that the Saviles could not immediately assume the ostensible direction of the feud, but Savile's mantle fell on the shoulders of one of his relatives, Lord Fauconberg, who already nourished a private grudge against the Lord President. He was the leader of a band of malcontents, Bouchiers and Cromwells linked together by the tie of kinship, which was still a great force in the Yorkshire of that day. It was not, however, merely with those of his own class that Wentworth was forced to do battle. He had also to call the financiers and captains of industry to account. And the history of the drainage of Hatfield Chase is there

¹ Clarendon, *History of the Rebellion*, vol. i. p. 364; Rachel Reid, *Council of the North*, p. 414.

to show that in his mouth the "protection of the helpless" was no idle phrase.

Undoubtedly, the social condition of the Northern Province was a hundred years behind that in Southern England, which furnished so intelligent a backing to Pym and Hampden. Sparsely peopled, a land of fell and pasture, the poorer inhabitants had probably not benefited by their transference at the Dissolution from the overlordship of the monasteries to that of the squires and nobles of a countryside still almost medieval. If this was true of Yorkshire as a whole, much more was it true of the vast tract of fen and forest known as Hatfield Chase, a Crown property which would have been an earthly paradise to William of Normandy, since even in Wentworth's time a herd of one thousand deer roamed its brakes. This great enclave of 70,000 acres, encompassed by the rivers Don, Went, Blackwater, and Idle, with its swanneries, its stags, and its streams swarming with fish, had retained much of the character of a primeval wilderness, so scantily inhabited, indeed, that three churches sufficed to minister to the fenmen. Gentry were nearly as few as churches, and were too often noted as "sons of misrule and violence". There was a prison at Thorne Peel, where borderers and poachers might be confined. But more often they went free, since tradition has it that venison was then as abundant as mutton "in the poor man's kitchen". In Domesday Book only 2400 acres of Hatfield Chase were entered as under cultivation, and five hundred years later little further effort had been made to reclaim the land.

It must not be supposed that the Stuarts, who loved hunting scarcely less than William the Conqueror, left their royal forest unvisited. In 1607, in honour of Henry, Prince of Wales, a battue of stags was organised, which long remained memorable as an unparalleled slaughter.

Possibly this hunting expedition of his son's may have

drawn James I.'s attention to Hatfield Chase. But, mighty huntsman though the King was, his perennial need of money induced him to consider the possibility of reclaiming the huge waste; and eventually he appointed a commission to inquire into the state of the Chase and the feasibility of drainage. The commissioners were also to ascertain whether the Crown tenants had not forfeited their forest rights and holdings by building new houses, by cutting down trees and destroying game—a verdict which was practically anticipated, since the fenmen lived by poaching.

At this period, though the science of drainage was little understood in England, the great works of reclamation in Holland had trained experts for such tasks, who were burning to exercise their talents and invest their funds in similar undertakings in Great Britain. Amongst these specialists was a certain Cornelius Vermuyden, the typical captain of industry of that age, resourceful, energetic, and unscrupulous. In May 1626 he succeeded in passing a contract with Charles for the drainage of the entire district. His payment was to consist in the allotment to himself of one-third of Hatfield Chase, the remaining land to be equally divided between the Sovereign and the tenants—an arrangement which, in addition to the repeal of the forest laws, would, it was hoped, reconcile them to the changes in their territory.

Vermuyden must have been a "hustler", for by the end of 1627 the Flemish workmen he imported had made such progress that a commission was embodied to survey and divide the land. Then came the disappointment which often waits on engineering enterprise. Vermuyden seems to have been mistaken in forcing the waters into the Don. He was obliged to cut another canal or "rhine", called the Dutch river, an expense which neither he nor his company had anticipated, while the fenmen loudly protested that

the waters had only been conveyed from the new to the old lands.¹

Popular discontent was consequently rife when in 1628 Sir John Savile and the commissioners further envenomed the quarrel by assigning the lowest and worst lands to the inhabitants. "Wild" justice, as Bacon calls it, was the sole means of redress they understood. Before long embankments were pulled down, Flemings were killed or wounded, and Vermuyden had expended much money to pacify his tormentors, and eloquence to secure the support of the Privy Council. Having bought up the royal rights, he was granted the Chase free of forest laws, but with the hampering clause that his patents could only take effect with the consent of the fenmen. Before long trouble broke forth again, and Vermuyden's appeal to Wentworth accompanied by the gift of the "fattest deer that can be gotten by the keepers" was unavailing. Wentworth evidently mistrusted Vermuyden, and with some reason, since on a fresh outburst following new inundations the latter rushed down to the Chase, flung many old freeholders into prison, threatened to hang others, and vowed that if he could only "have stayed in the country, he would set up a pair of gallows to terrify the people". These proceedings—happily described as "injudicious"—were more than the Privy Council could stomach, and in June 1630, four years after the inception of the work, the matter was referred to Wentworth, Darcy, and another commissioner.

Accordingly, in the summer of 1630, Wentworth and Lord Darcy journeyed down to Hatfield Chase to survey the works and to make the final award. To Wentworth, with his passion for sport, the temptation—in his own phrase—to "play the Robin Hood" in the deer-haunted coverts must have been great, though the intricacies of the business to be examined left scant leisure for shooting

¹ Hunter, *History of South Yorkshire*, p. 161.

and hawking. The award finally delivered is particularly interesting, since it reflects Wentworth's governing principles, his respect for ancient rights and customs, and his determination to champion the cause of the "poor, mean man". All suits, the arbitrators decreed, were forthwith to cease, copyholds to be held as heretofore at fixed fees; ancient customs of manor to be preserved, and tenants to have liberty to cut and sell wood on their estates. No forfeiture of any copyhold was to be incurred for cause given before the grant of the manor to Vermuyden, or since, by reason of any breach of fealty in opposing the lord. The allotments conferred by the Savile Commission on the tenants were confirmed, with some additions; while their rights to turbary, access to the moors, and passage free of toll by all "lanes of water" were jealously safeguarded.

Wentworth was, however, too intelligent an administrator to discourage enterprise which must eventually prove beneficial to the country, and Vermuyden had no cause to complain of an award which contained reciprocal rights and further discharged him and his syndicate from the payment of all royal rents and all "peculiar" forest customs. But strict justice was not Cornelius Vermuyden's objective. He was outraged by Wentworth's decision, and, being a gentleman of resource, promptly conveyed his lands to trustees—as Sir John Eliot had done when anticipating forfeiture as well as imprisonment—and very prudently conveyed himself out of the Lord President's jurisdiction. Moreover, though the Court of Exchequer summoned Vermuyden to publish the decree, unpublished it remained, and broken dykes worked havoc in the Chase. Wentworth memorialised the Privy Council to return Sir Cornelius with "an order to make just satisfaction to the country", where the chaotic conditions were causing "extreme inconvenience"; but the machinery of the law worked slowly, and it was more than a year before

the Council could coerce Vermuyden into obedience to the award.

Meanwhile a letter from one Robert Bridges shows that Wentworth was guilty of no exaggeration in describing the Dutchman's proceedings as causing "extreme inconvenience". The writer, whose account, like a Christmas carol, is interspersed with Latin ejaculations, evidently experienced much difficulty in getting through the floods even on horseback, and, in fact, was imprisoned in an upper chamber for a whole week.

"I did see mothers, Pyrrha-like," he writes, "trudging middle deep in water, with their infants hanging upon their breasts; and the fathers Deucalion-like bearing their children upon their shoulders to seek higher ground for their succour. All sorts of people in pitiful distress; some to save their lives, some their goods and cattle; some to get food for their hungry bodies. *Quis talia fando temperet a lacrymis?*"

"The holy prophet heard a voice of great mourning and lamentation, Rachel weeping for her children and would not be comforted because they were not. But I both see and hear these miserable mothers weeping for their children and would not be comforted, because they are as being an eyesore and grief unto them, and I deem the cause of this sorrow the greater. *Beati enim sunt mortui in Domino.*"

"Thus have strangers", he concludes, "prevailed to destroy our inheritance, and to convert that waste ground to their profit and our subversion, which our ancestors left for a sink and receptacle of inundant waters for our future safety."¹

Eventually the publication of the award took place, and the undertakers then set to work in good earnest. They had, however, evidently underestimated the cost of the gigantic enterprise, and cross suits took place. The com-

¹ Hunter, *South Yorkshire*, p. 164, note, September 6, 1630.

pany complained of Vermuyden, and complained still more of having to raise additional funds for additional drainage. Again, the whole business, Wentworth assisting, was evoked before the Privy Council, who referred it to the Courts of Law. Workmen meantime remained unpaid, and confusion reigned. It was not until 1633 that a solution was found. The original undertakers, wearied out, parted with their shares at nominal prices to a new set of proprietors, who having bought cheaply could afford to complete the work. And under the direction of a set of good and honourable Commissioners of Sewers, the dykes were kept in order, and peace once more descended on Hatfield Chase.

CHAPTER IX

THE Vermuyden episode exemplifies the responsibilities of the Lord President of the North and the need for the jurisdiction of the Court. It was not without abuses—increasing abuses as time went by—but Clarendon's charge of injustice to "the good northern folk" can scarcely be sustained in that instance, which, though on a bigger scale than usual, was not singular of its kind. Undoubtedly the fenmen would have fared worse if an energetic Lord President had not been their overlord.

It was of a piece with Wentworth's character that he should hold strong views on the duty of bearing arms in defence of the Commonwealth. But it must be remembered that the system, which he galvanised into being rather than created, had its agelong roots in the *fyrð* and *comitatus* of Anglo-Saxon England. In his speech at York, which is at once forecast and index of his intentions and dealings in the Northern Province, he had ordered the Deputy Lieutenants "to proceed roundly to see the arms of the County fully furnished". He held that "His Majesty hath power coercive" to require such arms, and he was determined to allow no evasion of Henry V.'s Statute. A letter to Lord Conway shows the difficulties he encountered.

One Nevett, "a peevish fellow", when summoned to the musters, had during seven years not only presented himself without a musket or equipment, but had actually dared "to make sport with the matter". His conduct was

indefensible, said Wentworth, since for one man who was richer than Nevett, there were ten worse off who did not shirk their duty.¹ Under Lord Scrope, Nevett had apparently gone scot-free; but he was ill-advised to flout the actual Lord President, for the report which was sent up with him to the Privy Council was calculated to make him regret his ill-timed levity.

"Being of a whining nature", wrote Wentworth, "he will make fair semblance to their Lordships unto whom he is not so well known as to us, but my zeal to his Majesty's service makes me become an humble suitor by Your Lordship to the Board that this peevish fellow may be made an example in such a degree as shall seem best to their wisdom which, in truth, is of greater consequence than at first sight might be imagined . . . there being indeed a universal defection, nay shaking off this duty almost in every corner of the kingdom. I wish with all my heart", he ended, "men in this age knew less and practised more."

It is perhaps unnecessary to add that before Wentworth left Yorkshire for Ireland, the northern levies and militia were amongst the best organised in England.

It has been so much the habit to think of Wentworth as "Black Tom Tyrant", that the necessity of a "severe hand to be held over men" of "peevish" disposition has perhaps escaped notice. The cases of Henry Bellasys, Lord Eure, and Sir David Foulis show that the northern gentry were no meek lambs offering themselves to the shearer. The Privy Council and the King's Bench were far away, and it would have fared ill with others besides the fenmen had a Lord President of less determination than Wentworth been at hand. For until the coming of the millennium the majority of reasonable beings will admit the desirability—in Wentworth's phrase—of "service for the defence of ourselves, our wives and children". Nor did he

¹ *S.P. Dom. Charles I.*, vol. iv. fol. 61: Wentworth to Lord Conway, October 14, 1629.

in this instance lack stout legal backing, since the ancient statute was upheld by the judges of the Court of Exchequer.

In the matter of knighthood fines, he was also within the strict letter of the law. But, as Freeman remarked, that which is traditionary has also become obsolete. A whole century had passed since knighthood, under penalty of a fine, had been made compulsory for all landowners of £40 a year and upwards. The requirements of the Commonwealth were no longer those of a feudal society where warfare was practically chronic; while the value of money had undergone such changes that the landowner of £40 per annum felt himself not only penalised, but made ridiculous by having a title thrust upon him which did not correspond to his income. To revive an obsolete law which by common consent has been allowed to lapse, simply and solely to make money, is not a proceeding that commends itself to true statesmanship. By Michaelmas 1631 the King had obtained £15,000, and nowhere were fines so strictly levied as under Wentworth's jurisdiction, but the large sums it brought to an empty Treasury did not compensate for the odium entailed.¹ Not only did it make "Knights more plentiful than gentlemen or loyal subjects", but the inquisitorial research into private estates caused widespread resentment.

A letter of Wentworth's to Laud some years later shows that he did not ignore the fury he had aroused, though, curiously enough, he seems to have treated its manifestations with surprising indifference—an indifference he would have been well advised to extend to similar outbursts in Ireland.

"Infamous and hellish libels," he wrote, "the best cure of them in Public is *contempt*, the use in private to let their

¹ *Fairfax Correspondence*, vol. i. pp. 212-13.

masters understand the falsehood and vanity of them and how injuriously they suffer for their Fidelity and Service. So as in my opinion as much is done as ought to be, for to seek further after them were to value them a great deale too much. I remember when I was imployed at York in rating ye Fines of Knighthood I was libelled all over that part of ye Kingdome, for one, hung up in effigie with Empson and Dudley, for another, my Lord Treasurer, that was, and myself painted upon Gibbets, our names underwritt with a great deale of poetry besides. These and other libellous cartels of several sorts were brought me by dozens, I had offer made me that ye Author of some of them should be found out. My answer was thanks for their good intentions towards me, but I knew myself innocent, that I could not wish soe much ill to any as to ruin them through the Discovery, that I hoped they might in time better understand me and themselves. And then I was sure their own guilt and shame would be their sufficient punishment. Till then I must possess myself in silence and patience. Thus did I quite spoil their feast. There was no noyse of them at all went abroad, and once within a month ye humour was spent, so as I never heard more of them since.

“My distinction when these insolencies trench upon the public, I would have them sought after and driven to ye uttermost of discovery and Punishment. But when their venom is only cast out against particulars I would bring them as little upon the Stage as might be.”¹

It is a pity that Wentworth did not act on these eminently sensible lines when confronted with criticisms in Ireland, or indeed when Leighton was brought before the Privy Council to answer for his *Sion's Plea against Prelacy*. In the latter case, however, he could certainly have replied that these insolencies “trenched” upon the public and were direct incitement to rebellion, and as such deserving chastisement. Few governments at that period

¹ Fitzwilliam MSS.: Wentworth to Laud, October 18, 1637.

would have allowed an exhortation to citizens "to strike neither at great or small but at these troublers of Israel; smite that Hazael in the 5th rib"—Laud presumably being Hazael—to pass unpunished. It was the barbarous form of the punishment that made a hero of a man whose past record showed that he was born to be a thorn in the side of any government. According to Leighton, Wentworth took a leading part in his examination and condemnation. Indeed, Leighton asserted that his trial was the occasion of cementing an alliance between Wentworth (who used "many and virulent expressions against him") and Laud—"a league like sun and moon to govern day and night, religion and State".¹

In the seventeenth century whipping and mutilation was almost as common a sentence as "a month or 20s." nowadays. A whole generation later the cruelties inflicted by Governor Endicott and the Puritan theocracy of Massachusetts on the harmless Quakers transcended even the revolting brutality of Leighton's treatment. Nevertheless, however much we must discount when summing up the influences of a bygone age, it is to be regretted that the "league", which ripened into the closest of friendships between Wentworth and Laud, dated from this particular occasion. All one can say is that it takes a long time for the noblest of our race to get away from the ancestral caveman.

The years 1630-31 taxed the system of local government to the uttermost. Trade depression and consequent unemployment were complicated by bad harvests. The severe drought was doubtless responsible both for the failure of crops and the outbreak of the plague. The Privy Council laid down drastic rules for the arrest of rogues and vagabonds, who might spread infection; compassionate housewives were enjoined to shut their doors on such

¹ Gardiner, vol. vii. p. 152, note.

wanderers, and to relegate them to the custody of the constable.¹ The proceedings were, however, not merely to be negative, for the necessitous poor were to be assisted and fed—regulations which were probably inspired by Wentworth, who, in his own domain, was the mainspring of organised resistance to the terrible scourge. It speaks volumes for his vigilance that, although the plague was raging in the southern counties during the summer of 1630, and the difficulties of enforcing quarantine on the frontiers of his province were tremendous, he kept it at bay in the north for a twelvemonth. Wentworth's great anxiety was to barricade it out of Halifax and Leeds, "those two greate townes, which two alone trade more than all the county besides, in good faith it would mightily distresse and impoverish that side of the country".² He consequently forbade all public fairs, rather quaintly adding "all passages betwixt us and Lincolnshire by water stopped as much as may be, to the intent that cumming by land they may be a little better aired before they come into this part of the country". Nor did he wait for its advent to instruct the Mayor and Corporation of York regarding the help they were to provide. As usual, he was explicit.

"You have heare", he wrote, "under His Majesty the chardge and government of this people which is to be required at your hands, both before God and Man, more especially by myself and this Council, as persons trusted in these and accountable as well as yourselves and therefore in discharge of my duty to my Master, but my affection also to this towne, I doe expect that you punctually observe these orders following withall. I must tell you plainlie I will informe myself verie dilligently how they are observed and executed, and shall proceed severely to

¹ Gardiner, vol. vii. p. 161.

² J. J. Cartwright, *Chapters on the History of Yorkshire*, pp. 248-51: Wentworth to Lord Dorchester, September 22, 1631.

punish your negligence and others' disobedience of them, and *that shall Wilson, the chirugion* in particular smart for, when, it may be, he little dreames of it. These are not things to be jested withall."¹

Despite all precautions, the epidemic could not be indefinitely warded off. In the autumn of 1631, according to Wentworth, it was introduced into his little capital

"by a lewde woman who brake forth of Arnim with the sore running upon her, lodged in an inn outside of the towne and there ungraciously left it behind her; since then are dead in that street sum fourscore persons, and hath not as yet, God be prayed, gott within the walls, saving in two houses, forth of which all the dwellers are removed to the Pest houses; but is broken forth without the walls at two other ends of the town, and into Huntingdon and Acam, two little villages within two miles of us. Thus we stand, expecting what God will doe for us. . . . The towne takes much comfort in our stay here and would fall into affrights and confusion if we leave them; soe as yet we hold on our ordinary sitting and we dispense of His Majesty's accustomed justice to his people; and in good faithe, I should for my parte be very loathe to leave them in this distressed case, seeing they conceive they are much the better for my stay amongst them, and that in truth I think they are much more orderly than they would be under the government of the Maior alone."

If Wentworth was a strict overseer of his flock, it must be admitted that he was no hireling. Nor can we wonder that in an emergency the citizens preferred his rule to that of the Mayor; and his rule was justified, since to save 50 per cent of the sick in such an epidemic by dint of intelligent and thoughtful organisation was a real triumph measured by the terrible death-roll of the seventeenth-century plague years. Probably it was largely his determination

¹ *York Corporation House Book*, vol. 35, fol. 115 (1625-1663): Wentworth to Lord Mayor, August 31, 1631.

that the "visited persons" should be well provided for "the necessities of nature", and the "Phisitions' drugs", of which he allowed no stint, that, in his own words, corrected "the malignity of the contagion".

The King's "accustomed justice to his people" included a variety of subjects, and the paternal tone adopted by his representatives recalls the homilies addressed by police court magistrates to estranged couples. The Privy Council Registers are full of such subjects. Thus Wentworth is enjoined to call before him Dorothe Gardiner, the relict of Edward Gardiner, "whose distressed estate we (the Privy Council) greatly commiserate, and the adverse parties, and to settle such a finall as shall be consonant to equitie and justice".¹ Again, a certain Sir Richard Hawkesworth, who had differences with his wife, was to be summoned before Wentworth, and to be bound over to drop the suit for the restitution of his child which he had instituted against the maternal grandfather, Sir Henry Gooderich. The child was to remain in the custody either of his mother or her parents, and Sir Richard was to pay £30 a year for its maintenance. If he proved recalcitrant, Wentworth was to send him up to London to answer his contempt before their Lordships, "who will take such a course with him that he shall find what it is to neglect and slight the authority of this Board".²

As nothing more regarding the case appears, Sir Richard presumably capitulated, and, autocratic though the Council's despatch sounds, when we remember that "English Law was husband's Law", it is not altogether to be regretted that a considerable amount of dispensing power was vested in the King's representatives.

Powerful as he was, the cases of Henry Bellasys and his

¹ *Privy Council Registers*, vol. vii. 375: Privy Council to Wentworth, July 25, 1629.

² *Idem*, vol. vii. 85: Privy Council to Wentworth, July 8, 1631.

father, Lord Fauconberg, show that Wentworth did not meet with invariable submission. The costs of the Poor Law had not conduced to Wentworth's popularity. Henry Bellasys lived in the very centre of a smouldering revolt against the Lord President, and, like the bumptious young fool he was, took the earliest opportunity of expressing the family's disapproval of Wentworth.

That opportunity occurred when the Lord President was holding a solemn meeting in the great hall at York. Not only on entering did Bellasys omit to make the customary reverence to the King's representative, but when Wentworth left the room with the Royal Mace, the emblem of sovereignty, borne before him, the

"said Mr. Bellasis putting himself in a conspicuous part of the room as his Lordship passed along in full sight of most of the company, stood with his hat on his head, looking full upon his Lordship, without stirring the said hat, or using any reverence or civility to the said Lord President. Howbeit, the said Mr. Bellasis did salute the person that immediately followed after."¹

It would have been impossible for any governor to pass over so public an affront, the rather that the foolish youth subsequently attempted to justify his action to friends who remonstrated with him. He was consequently despatched to the Privy Council Board in London, where, although he vowed "upon his salvation" that he had not intended any disrespect to the Lord President, he failed to make a good impression, their Lordships being further incensed at his daring to appear before their august tribunal with a "cudgel" in his hand, "which was taken to be very rude and unusual". Nevertheless, as Wentworth had privately intimated that he hoped the delinquent might be let off easily, Bellasys was told that on his signing an apology, which reiterated his own excuses, he would be spared

¹ *Privy Council Registers*, vi. 448, April 6, 1631.

further punishment. This he refused to do, and was committed to the Gatehouse, where during the next month he had leisure to meditate on the disadvantages of incivility. A humble petition brought him again before the Council, and the form of submission was produced for his signature. But when, both in speech and writing, he attempted to draw a distinction between the person and the position of the Lord President his judges' patience was exhausted. Wentworth, in his place at the Board, declared that if Henry Bellasys had shown due respect and obedience to the Council, he would have "forgotten and passed by his contemptuous demeanour towards" himself, and have begged that Bellasys might be spared the repetition of the apology at York. In fact, as Secretary Coke testified, Wentworth had already petitioned the King in this sense. Since, however, he considered the Sovereign rather than his deputy the person aggrieved in his "authority and honour", after the raising of this quibble, Mr. Bellasys "still declaring his ill affection towards him, he held himself disobliged from any mediation at all . . . and merely moved that Right might be done to Magistracy, as the place he held under His Majesty required", leaving the verdict to their Lordships' "greater wisdom". Their Lordships, after praising the honourable carriage of the Lord President as much as they "blamed the unmannerly, insolent, and saucy carriage" of the offender, allowed him one last chance of retrieving himself. The lout seems at last to have awakened to the quandary he had manufactured for himself, and now, thoroughly frightened, was thankful to escape with a "grave but sharp reprehension from the Lord Keeper". He signed the apology, and the incident was closed.

If Lord Fauconberg did not blunder so grossly as his malapert son, his subtler methods were infinitely more dangerous, since it was the jurisdiction of the Council of

the North that he arraigned, declaring that its jurisdiction did not extend to Peers in criminal cases, and that, moreover, Wentworth hastened the processes of contempt on purely personal grounds. Any suspicion of his integrity stung Wentworth to the quick, and he was further outraged by the fact that Fauconberg did not attack him openly, but sent his accusation privately in the shape of a petition to the King.

"Secret as it is made to me", wrote Wentworth, "that Lord and his agents make it no secret to others. They publish it among their confidants how it contains a direct charge of injustice against me. . . . I most earnestly desire again a copy may be sent me down. I am able to bear any reproof better than to be accused as a faithless Minister in those trusts which His Majesty shall vouchsafe between him and his people."¹

When the petition was brought up before the Privy Council, a tremendous reproof was administered to Fauconberg, who was informed that no subject, however great, could pretend to exemption from His Majesty's Courts of Justice, also "how high a presumption it is to abuse the sacred ears of a King with misinformation". He was ordered to apologise, and on his refusal was committed to the Fleet. A fortnight's imprisonment brought repentance and a humble petition. Wentworth's character being cleared, he then became a "humble suitor" for Lord Fauconberg's discharge; and the prisoner having promised to repair to Yorkshire and to obey the orders of the Court, His Majesty—by reason *only* of the humble request of the Lord President—graciously granted Wentworth's prayer.² Thus it was to Wentworth that Fauconberg owed his release, but, human nature being what it is, he was not thereby disarmed.

¹ *Hist. MSS.*: Cowper MSS., vol. ii. 420: Lord Wentworth to Sir J. Coke, December 23, 1630, York.

² *Privy Council Registers*, viii. 520, March 20, 1632.

Lord Fauconberg and his son had conducted their resistance to the President and Council of the North on lines not unusual in civilised countries. With the case of Lord Eure of Malton we step back into the Middle Ages. This nobleman being deep in debt, had agreed to surrender Malton Castle to feoffees to be sold for the benefit of his creditors. When the feoffees, however, presented themselves at his gates, armed with the Court of Chancery's writ, Lord Eure and his sons, who, like the Hatfield gentry, were "sons of misrule and violence", in a tumultuous and violent manner barricaded themselves within the castle and refused to allow the officers to serve the writ. Not unnaturally, the Privy Council branded such behaviour as "an example of very dangerous consequence and in no sort to be tolerated, especially in a person of his consequence"; and Wentworth was empowered "to proceed to the batterie of the said house until it be rendered".¹ Accordingly, the High Sheriff and the trained bands, with ordnance from Scarborough Castle, were deputed to bring the rebels to reason. Yet so thick were the walls of the old keep, and so active was the "multitude of people" Lord Eure had recruited for its defence, that it required divers batteries before the garrison surrendered.² Lord Eure was committed to the Tower, and obedience to His Majesty's seal was ultimately enforced, but the story is singularly out of keeping with the records of an orderly English Court. Most of all, it shows the difference in England south and north of the Trent.

After such an episode we may doubt whether the existence of the Court of the North was so unnecessary as the orators of the Long Parliament pretended. It explains further why throughout his term of office Wentworth regarded the question of the limitation of his jurisdiction as

¹ *Privy Council Registers*, viii. p. 235; Privy Council to Wentworth, Oct. 19, 1632.

² *Idem*, November 21, 1632.

vital. It is clear that if a defendant could evade the Court's decrees by merely crossing the boundaries into Lincolnshire or Lancashire, or by removing to London to appeal to the Courts at Westminster, thereby hanging up the suit for months, the Council of the North became equally ridiculous and impotent. It was to prevent this very state of affairs that Wentworth had insisted that the powers vested in the Council by Henry VIII. should be further strengthened by Charles I.'s "instructions". Had the fugitives from York been merely cases like Lord Eure or Vermuyden, though strict constitutionalists might have murmured, the harm would have been small. Unluckily, the outstanding prosecution—that of Sir David Foulis—in which Wentworth affirmed his powers, entitled though he would have been at any epoch to swingeing damages for libel, was so bound up with personal reflections as to assume a revengeful aspect.

Sir David Foulis was a Scotsman, who had been useful to James I. at the period when it was uncertain whether Mary's son would succeed Elizabeth. James had lavishly rewarded him for these services with grants from the Lennox territories in Yorkshire. Cofferer to the Prince of Wales, a member of the Council of the North, Deputy Lieutenant, Justice of the Peace, Foulis was a person to be reckoned with throughout the northern province; while, on his side, the Lord President had some right to expect that Sir David, for his oath's sake alone, would support the authority of the Council. But, tarred as he was with corruption, that canker of officialdom under the Stuarts, when he was removed from the Commission for the recusants' compositions—the most favourable position for feathering a nest—he threw such considerations aside, and promptly allied himself to the Savile-Fauconberg gang.

Wentworth declared that he had gone out of the way to

show Foulis the "best respect".¹ The fact that he was responsible for bringing home to the ex-Cofferer a debt of £5000 or £6000 to the Crown, which, in Wentworth's phrase, Foulis had been content "to bagg up, keep it close in his stomacke this twenty years, in plain termes, cheated the King of," naturally far outweighed the Lord President's meticulous courtesy. Indeed, from the day that the auditors descended on his accounts, Foulis craved to get his knife into Wentworth, and, thanks to the unpopularity of knighthood fines, felt secure of a backing amongst the Yorkshire gentry. On one occasion, before a crowd of hearers, he declared:

"that the people of Yorkshire did adore Wentworth, and were so timorous and fearful to offend his Lordship, that they would undergo any charge rather than displease him; and that his Lordship was much respected in Yorkshire, but at Court he was no more respected than any other man, and as soon as his back was turned for Ireland his place of Presidentship of the Council would be bestowed on another man."²

This cannot have been pleasant hearing for Wentworth, though, at first, very sensibly, he paid no heed, ascribing such outbursts to misunderstanding, or the "personal malice" of tale-bearers.³ When, however, from vague abuse Foulis proceeded to accuse him of downright dishonesty, and of pocketing the knighthood fines, no gentleman could well have omitted to bring his traducer to book. It was an eminently foolish calumny for a canny Scot to launch, since Wentworth was notoriously so scrupulous about money matters that he actually gave offence by refusing the customary presents to high officials. He was also too business-like and too well served to have the faintest

¹ Browning's *Life of Strafford*, App. II. p. 301: Wentworth to Lord Carlisle, October 24, 1632.

² *Rushworth Coll.*, vol. ii. p. 217.

³ *Idem.*

difficulty in proving his case up to the hilt, with a multitude of "tallies and constats" which showed that not only had he paid £24,500 to the King or the Exchequer, but that he was £700 out of pocket by disbursements for the Service.

Foolish as were already these attempts to defame Wentworth, Sir David's hatred of the Lord President led him yet further in opposition to the Government. As a member of the Council of the North he was bound to assist in the collection of the various dues, including knighthood fines, which, however ill-advised, the highest judicial tribunal had pronounced to be legal contributions. Nevertheless, he openly dissuaded the neighbouring gentry from compounding. At a public meeting at Sir Thomas Leyton's, the High Sheriff, where the audience were manifestly unwilling to oppose the requisition, this councillor burst out with the amazing speech that

"Yorkshire gentlemen had been in time past accounted and held stout-spirited men, and would have stood for their Rights and Liberties and were wont to be the worthiest of all Shires in the Kingdom. And that in former times all other Shires did defend and would direct all their great actions by that county . . . but now in these days, Yorkshiresmen were become degenerate, more dastardly and more cowardly than the men of other counties, wanting their wonted courage and spirit, which they formerly used to have."¹

The kind of justice at which Foulis and his like aimed was shortly afterwards exemplified—and turned to his undoing. In Wentworth's absence, one Wivel, who had compounded directly with Wentworth for his knighthood fine, and held the Lord President's quittance, had £39 levied on him, and his goods sold for distraint by Leyton's order. Leyton thus did the very thing (duplicating the

¹ *Rushworth Coll.*, vol. ii. pp. 215-17.

finer in spite of receipts) which Foulis, in order to hinder compounding, had prophesied would happen when Wentworth left England. The Council, quite rightly, considered that "the exaction was meet to be punished". Accordingly, a King's Letter was served on Leyton bidding him repair to York. Whether he would have dared to disobey the mandate unless instigated by Foulis, is doubtful. But that amazing councillor, in the presence of a great assembly of knights and gentry, advised Leyton to refuse on the ground

"that the Court was a Paper Court, that the said Court had nothing to do with a Justice of the Peace, who was above the Court of York, since one was by Act of Parliament and the other by Commission".¹

Leyton, said Foulis, should acquaint His Majesty before he obeyed the summons, adding "he cared not who heard it, nor if it were proclaimed on the Housetop"; in consequence of which advice Leyton refused to present himself at the Council Board. To this barefaced defiance there was but one answer. Three days later, the Pursuivant arrived, arrested the High Sheriff, and carried him off to York. Nor was he discharged until he had answered the Council's interrogations, and repaid to Wivel the £39, plus the forty shillings extorted by his Bailiff. "During all which time of this Defendant's restraint", as he piteously informed the Star Chamber, "he was High Sheriff for the Council of York, of all which he desireth a consideration might be had", a protest calling for the evident rejoinder that it was his position which made his defiance of law and order so peculiarly heinous.

Leyton's sad plight seems to have brought Foulis to his senses. He sneaked up to York, and tried, but tried vainly, to discuss matters privately with the Lord President.

¹ *Rushworth Coll.*, vol. ii. p. 218.

"The King's board", wrote Wentworth, "was no fitt place for those discourses; therefore I desired him to excuse me, the matters between him and me being of such a condition as should not be heard privately in a Chamber, but must passe the file of His Majesty's Courts of Justice, and soe risse, went my way."¹

To Lord Carlisle's plea on behalf of Foulis, he replied:

"My Lord, you best know how much the regall power is becummend infirm, by the easy way such have found, who with rough hands have laid hold upon the flowers of itt, and with unequal and swaggering paces have trampled upon the rights of the Crowne, and how necessary examples are (*as well for the subject as the Sovereign*) to retain licentious spirits within the sober bounds of humility and feare. And surely if in any other, then in the case of this man who hath the most wantonly, the most disdainfully demeaned himself towards His Majesty and his Ministers that is possible, so as if he doe not taste of the rodde, it will be impossible to have His Majesty's Council here to be obeyed, and should I say lesse were to betray the trust my master hath honoured me with. I heare he cries out of oppression; soe did my Lord Fauconberg too, Your Lordship heard with what reason or truth; believe me, this man hath more witt, but his cause is so much worse, as he hath notwithstanding lesse to say for himself; in this, nevertheless they are tied by the tales together that both of *them dared to strike the Crowne upon my shoulders* without being at all concerned in my owne interest, or having any other part to play then innocence and patience shall suggest unto me. And truly give me leave to assure Your Lordship I have much reason to carry my eyes along with me wherever I goe, and to expect my actions from the highest to the lowest shall be cast into the balance, and tried whether heavy or light. *Content in the name of God! Lett them take me up and cast me downe, if I doe not fall square, and (to use a word of aritte) paragon in every pointe of my duty to my*

¹ Wentworth to Lord Carlisle, September 24, 1632; Forster MSS. App. II. 298-300; Browning, *Life of Strafford*.

*master; nay if I doe not fully complie with that publick and common protection which good kings afforde their good people, let me perishe and let no man pittie me. In the meantime none of these clamours or other apprehensions shall shake me, or cause me to decline my master's honour and service, thereby to please or soothe these populare, frantike humours, and if I miscarry this way, I shall not even then be founde either so indulgent to myself, or soe narrowly harted towards my master as to think myself too good to die for him."*¹

Thus in a spirit of curious prescience ran what we may well consider Wentworth's confession of faith. Nor can it be regarded as an ignoble creed when we remember that to his generation the Sovereign represented those sanctities of national life to which to-day we give the name of England.

Foulis was now thoroughly scared.

"There was a wonder", writes Wentworth, "(Catholike enough indeede) in all men to see him soe poorly and meanly humble in the same town, where within a few weekes before, he had as insolently demeaned himself, I dare confidently say, more insolently than ever any of His Majesty's Counsell heare, and a Deputy Lieutenant had done to the President and King's Lieutenant."

He tried to get influential courtiers to persuade the King to evoke the case before him, and went so far—to Wentworth's indignation—as to declare it would be to the King's advantage, as his disgrace might hurt the royal service. "Lord, with Esope's flie upon the axle tree of the wheel what a dust he makes", scornfully cried Wentworth. Foulis's efforts were, however, in vain. Sir David, his son, and the High Sheriff were cited before the Star Chamber, and though his supporters pleaded his past services, Laud is said to have turned the scale against him with one of

¹ Browning, App. II. p. 301; *S.P. Dom. Charles I.*, ccxxiv. 45: Wentworth to Lord Carlisle, York, October 24, 1632.

the puns in which his acid wit found exercise: "All fowlis a moulting time, especially of sick feathers",¹ and Foulis, not moulting, was plucked.

He was condemned "to pay £5000 to H.M., to be committed to the Fleet during His Majesty's pleasure, to acknowledge his great and several offences both to His Majesty and the said Viscount Wentworth" in the Star Chamber, the Court at York, and the Assizes, where the decree was to be read. Further, since he had "breathed out so much faction and disobedience", he was to be turned out of all his offices; lastly, he was to pay £3000 to Wentworth. His son, who also was committed to the Fleet, was fined £500 to the King, while Leyton was contemptuously dismissed the Court.

These enormous fines, and the fact that the defendants, having refused to pay, remained imprisoned until the Long Parliament set them free, have been reckoned amongst Charles's and Wentworth's most arbitrary acts. Yet it is only fair to say that contempt of Court was held punishable by almost unlimited imprisonment right into the nineteenth century. Lord Eldon's draconic sentences are well known, and are certainly less justifiable than that passed on Foulis, though in this case the fine to Charles merely represented the debt "bagged up" by the dishonest Cofferer. As for Wentworth's fine, it was not the first or the last time that slander has brought its just meed of retribution in a court of justice.

Shortly before he wrote the letter to Carlisle cited above, the dispute over knighthood fees had brought home to Wentworth the necessity of explaining the situation. The summer Assize at York gave him his opportunity, and he then pointed out that the cost of compounding was a bare third or fourth of the sum demanded as a fine by the Court of Exchequer. "The little finger of the Law was heavier

¹ *Rushworth Coll.*, vol. ii. pp. 219-20.

than the loins of the King", he said—a Scriptural quotation which his enemies at his trial turned completely round against him.¹ Wentworth was not guilty of exaggeration, since one James Mauleverer, who was tried in the Exchequer Court for refusing to pay, unless compelled to do so by process of Common Law, had writs of distress for £2000 issued against him, most of which he had to pay.

Though the judgements and assessments of the Council of the North might be comparatively moderate, it was the Governmental control from which they derived that the gentry resented, and were determined to frustrate. To deny the jurisdiction of a prerogative Court outside the limits of the Commission offered a fighting chance, and this chance was seized by Sir Thomas Gower.

This gentleman "in his place on the Bench", wrote Wentworth, "had after his frequent and lavish manner spoken publicly very scandalous words against His Majesty's Attorney—Radcliffe—and indeed, through him, fixed a great imputation upon all as far forth as a tongue so well understood among his neighbours was able to carry it".²

When summoned to York to explain, he took refuge in the plea that his wife was ill. On this score, and on his "faithful promise" to appear, he was allowed a fortnight's respite, but instead of honouring his pledge he withdrew to London. Thence he refused to stir, declaring that he could hope for no counsel in York, since the King's attorney, Sir George Radcliffe, was Wentworth's cousin and friend.³ Wentworth, who had precedents to support his action, replied with the issue of a commission of rebellion and sent a Serjeant-at-Arms to arrest the fugitive.

¹ R. Reid, *Council of the North*, p. 418.

² *S.P. Dom. Charles I.*, vol. v. fol. 1; Wentworth to Lords of the Privy Council, December 1, 1632.

³ R. Reid, *Council of the North*, p. 416.

Bail he could have had. But bail he contemned. He "bustled" about, giving the Serjeant-at-Arms the impression that he intended to evade his custody, and petitioned the Privy Council for release, on the ground than an officer of the Northern Courts had no right to arrest him in London. Then Wentworth's wrath blazed forth.

"A provincial Court at York, or none, it is surely the very mark they shoot at. All eyes are at gaze there and every ear listening here what becomes of it."

If Sir Thomas Gower is justified, all the decrees of the Council of the North become

"mere brute fulminations, fruitless to the people, useless to the King, and ourselves altogether unable to govern and contain within the bounds of sobriety a people sometimes so stirring as live under it, which partly appeared in the last business of Malton, where (we dare without vanity speak it) had it not been for the little power and credit that is yet left us here, the injunction of the Chancery itself had been as ill obeyed, as little respected as either our Commission or Serjeant at Holborn".

The Privy Council, being evidently desirous to keep well within the letter of the law, referred the case to Noye, the Attorney-General, who reported in favour of the Council of the North. Accordingly, in February 1633, Fauconberg and Gower were despatched to York in the custody of the Serjeant-at-Arms to make their humble submission to the Lord President.

Wentworth could now go to Ireland knowing that in his absence the "Rebels of the North"—as Gower and his henchmen were commonly called—would no longer be able to set the Council at defiance.¹ Probably the long delay between his appointment as deputy and his de-

¹ Reid, *Council of the North*, p. 417.

parture for Dublin was, in part, due to his desire to get this knotty point decided once for all.

He did not, however, leave matters there. The fact that Sir Arthur Ingram was about to surrender the Secretaryship involved the issue of a new Commission, enriched by new and more detailed instructions.¹ It was these same instructions which Hyde attacked when Strafford was brought to trial, but they seem rather the elucidation of the old Tudor instructions than a sensational innovation. The jurisdiction of the Council was defined and powers were granted to deal with offences against law and order, on the same lines that the Star Chamber or Chancery dealt with such cases. The punishment of unlawful or clandestine marriages was admitted within its purview, and it was further decreed that when the parties were dead or beyond the seas evidence taken at York was to be accepted in other Courts.

These instructions were, however, not suffered without protest. When they were quoted to Mr. Justice Vernon, then sitting on the Bench at Durham, he dared to say "that he knew of no such matter; the instructions were nothing to him!"² At the same time he refused to recognise the compositions entered into with recusants, and ordered the enforcement of all the penal statutes against them.

This last order crowned Wentworth's indignation. As he truly said, the unhappy Papists "would think there is no faith to be kept with them upon earth". He petitioned for Vernon's removal from circuit, which must have made the recusants feel that he was no less just than severe.

It is interesting to note that, although at his trial Strafford's actions as President were brought up against him—charges sustained by personal enemies, such as Sir Thomas Leyton and Sir David Foulis—these clauses had to be dropped. The Council of the North was abolished

¹ Reid, *Council of the North*, pp. 423-4.

² *Idem*, p. 425.

in 1641 at the same time as the Star Chamber, but a short six months later, Charles was presented with petitions from Yorkshire for its reinstatement. At the Restoration, the Council would probably have been restored if Hyde had not become Lord Chancellor. He could not stultify himself by advocating the restoration of a Court in the destruction of which he had been the principal agent. These two facts go far to discredit much of the vague accusation of arbitrary and illegal action brought against Strafford and the tribunal of which he was Lord President.

CHAPTER X

HITHERTO, hard as Wentworth had laboured and struggled for his political ideals, his private life had been singularly happy. His second wife, Lady Arabella Holles, from all accounts, was a beautiful character, worshipped by her husband, from whom she was seldom parted, even in the long journeys to and from London. Wentworth made the interests of her family his own, and though his intimacy with that stormy being Denzil Holles did not survive the parting of their parliamentary ways, judging from their correspondence, the terms on which he lived during his wife's life with Lord and Lady Clare seem to have been unusually happy.

[It must be confessed that there is a certain satisfaction in discovering that the precise Wentworth, so meticulous in all his dealings, was not above forgetting to return books he had borrowed, and, moreover, that, great man though he was, he was promptly called to account by his father-in-law.

"Son Wentworth", wrote Lord Clare, "when you and I were ever last together at Brigden, my Lord of Lincoln lent me a book of many Parliaments, notes and precedents, and among them sum of Sir Walter Rawler's [Raleigh's] which book you then desyred to borrow of me, and which, as yet, you have not returned. Now my Lord of Lincoln demanded it of me, and I have promised to bring it with me at my return this way in the term, wherefore I pray you without fayle send it me downe by your servant, Richard Marris, or sum safe messenger, and that as

speedily as you can, that I may have the tyme also to look into it. God grant you and my daughter healthe, and help you both with his comfort.

“Your very loving father,

CLARE.”¹

The Vandyke of Lady Arabella at Wentworth Woodhouse goes far to explain her husband's devotion to his “Saint in Heaven”. Many women more regularly beautiful sat to the great painter, but few radiate the charm of this lady, who seems almost to step out of the canvas in a spirit of eager welcome. She there appears a healthy young woman, the very incarnation of *mens sana in corpore sano*. In reality, however, she cannot have been strong, for Radcliffe's letters frequently allude to illnesses of “My lady”, and a letter from Wentworth to his trusty steward shows that on one occasion at least her husband had cause for very serious alarm.

“Richard Marris”, he writes, “I am put into a great fear upon a speech with Doctor Moore concerning my Wife's breast. He tells me it may prove a cancer, which would much endanger her. Hereupon, I have sent down Robert Wilton post with a letter to Doctor Deane to come over presently to Woodhouse with Doctor Leake and the best surgeon they have at York. If it be neither cancer, nor of cancerous disposition, then by God's help there is no danger, they may by gentle degrees go on to the cure, but if it be so unhappy, then would I have you get them to make a full relation of the whole hither by post to me before Saturday night. If this mishap befall us, which I trust in God shall not, then am I resolved to come presently down and fetch her up. Therefore if after speech with the doctors they fear a cancer, I would have you privately be making all things ready for coming up hither.

“I will send down the Coach horses, and that you also [provide] a litter for her to ride in, but by no means let my Wife know anything of danger, howsoever it appears to

¹ Fitzwilliam MSS.: Earl of Clare to Wentworth, Brigden, 1627.

be. You may have a litter at my Uncle Blithmares; for love of God, have a special care therein. Be you there when the Physicians come, let it be carried discreetly and handsomely that the servants take no notice of it, only you may acquaint my Cousin Radcliffe with the whole, and desire her to write what she thinks of it. . . . This fear of my Wife troubles me exceedingly. I shall not be at ease till I hear from you. God almighty bless her.—Your Master and friend,
WENTWORTH.”¹

Doctor Moore’s suspicions proved unfounded. But Lady Wentworth’s constitution proved unequal to the heavy strain imposed by the number of children she bore in a short period. In 1626 William was born, followed in October 1627, during Wentworth’s imprisonment, by Anne, Arabella in 1630, and an infant son in 1631. His death must have been a severe blow to Wentworth, who longed for a second son, though from Lord Clare’s letter he evidently sank his own grief in the effort to cheer and support his wife. The little creature must have died during his parents’ absence, for Lord Clare writes:

“Son Wentworth, I am sorrie with you for the death of my litell grandchild, on whom God, who doeth all things for the best, hath wrought his will. I am glad my daughter, your wyfe, through your endeavour digesteth so well this hard morsell, but cozen Stanhope should have dun more discreetly to have past by such news, for ill tydings cum too soon, and few wise men will be the bringers of them, if they can avoyd them, unles it be to prevent a greater inconvenience. God give you others, and will more, submitting to His will. God graunt my daughter your wyfe well delivered of the burden she hath, for by experience yearly you find she is no niggard of such fruit. The Lord of Heaven bless you and yours and give you comfort of yours.”²

¹ Fitzwilliam MSS.: Wentworth to Richard Marris, Westminster, April 22, 1629.

² *Idem*: Lord Clare to Wentworth, August 22.

A devoted husband, Wentworth was no less a devoted father; and, indeed, his most charming letters concern either his own children, or those of the relatives and friends to whom he stood godfather. During their absence, when he and Lady Arabella were obliged to leave their babies at York, they were consigned to the care of Sir William Pennyman, Wentworth's Vice-President, whose letters about his young charges enliven the official documents. At three years of age, "Mistress Anne" must already have developed something of her father's masterful spirit, for Pennyman, writing of some building undertaken by Wentworth, says:

"Your Lordship need not fear the going forward of your building, when you have so careful a steward as Mistress Anne. She complained to me very much of two rainy days, which, as she said, hindered her from coming down, and the Building from going up, because she was enforced to keep her Chamber and could not overlook the Workmen."¹

On another occasion, when Sir William had travelled down from London and arrived at York, rather sad at having lamed two of his horses on the terrible roads, he gives an account of his reception by the little party, which seems to bridge the gulf between our own and those distant days.

"At our arrival at York", he writes, "we found Mr William and Mistress Anne and all the rest of your Lordship's family very well. They were not a little glad to receive their tokens, and yet, they said they would be more glad to receive your Lordship and their worthy mother; we all, with one vote, agreed in their opinion, and wished that your Lordship's occasions might be as swift and speedy in their despatch as our thoughts and desires are in wishing them."²

¹ *Letters*, vol. i. p. 55: Sir William Pennyman to Wentworth, York, March 12, 1630.

² *Idem*, vol. i. p. 57, June 21, 1631.

Poor Master William and Mistress Anne! Though Wentworth's "occasions" speedily allowed of their parents' return, Lady Wentworth was not fated to remain long with her infants. She was once more in delicate health, and a trivial accident had sad consequences. It appears that Wentworth came into her bedchamber from the garden, without noticing that "a strange fly" had settled on his coat. Lady Wentworth hastened to wipe it off, but the creature spread such large wings, "so fearful to her" that in stepping back, she either twisted her foot, or, as her sorrowing husband believed, "rather the fright, not being used to such vermin", occasioned a shock, and brought on a premature confinement which proved fatal.¹

Radcliffe carried the little son to the dying woman's bedside to receive her last blessing, and when all was over, like the true friend he was, remained for some days and nights with Wentworth, who was distraught with grief. Long years afterwards, when Sir George put on record his recollections of the friend it had been his pride and happiness to serve, his memory lingered on those hours of intimate communion when sorrow had broken down Wentworth's habitual reserve, and, as he testified,

"he did lay open to me the very bottom of his heart. . . . From that discourse", Radcliffe continues,² "I received much satisfaction, as left no scruple with me at all but much assurance of his chastity. I knew his ways long and intimately, and though I cannot clear him of all frailties (for who can justify the most innocent man?) yet I must give him the testimony of conscientiousness in his ways that he kept himself from gross sins, and endeavoured to approve himself rather unto God than unto man, to be religious inwardly and in truth, rather than outwardly and in shew."

When we remember the current morality, or rather

¹ *Fairfax Correspondence*, vol. i. p. 237: Ferdinando Fairfax to Lord Fairfax, October 8, 1631.

² *Letters*, vol. ii. App. p. 435.

immorality of the age, this is no small tribute to a man of vehement passions, placed in a position where he had ample opportunity to gratify every idle desire.

It appears that the town of York shared his grief. To Wentworth, who in the first flush of bereavement wrote of her as the "incomparable woman and wife my eyes shall ever behold", she remained the ideal love, the "Saint in Heaven", to whom he referred in that peroration to his speech, which even his enemies could not hear unmoved.

Love of his children was an integral part of Wentworth's character, but the fact that they were also hers, and that he had to supply the lack of her influence is reflected over and over again in his meticulous care of his boy and girls. Thus an undated letter on that subject to Richard Marris is curious to read, coming from a man immersed in business.

"I thank you for advising with Nurse Bee so as the children want nothing; poor innocents, God Almighty bless them and make them his servants. I would not for a World they should want anything. I pray you let them be careful to keep Arabella warm, else I fear cold weather may do her much harm. God bless her with health, for she is a very fine child. I will not fail, God willing, to bring some Bere¹ down with me for them, and advise with Doctor Moore concerning their ordering and diet."²

And four years after her death he writes, presumably to Sir Edward Stanhope:

"If ever I have my little ones about me, your cousins, who I make as much of as I can, and I do most humbly beseech God to enable me to become the father unto them I desire and endeavour to be, and then I daresay never children had a better. When I look upon them I call to mind their Mother then whose memory nothing in the

¹ A kind of barley.

² Fitzwilliam MSS.: Wentworth to Richard Marris, Westminster, December 31 (?).

whole world can ever be lodged in me with soe much dearness and reverence.”¹

In the circumstances it is therefore something of a shock to find that only a year later he had married again, though perhaps it is not wholly surprising that he was again fortunate in his choice. Nevertheless, for him, as long as his heart beat, Arabella remained the fixed star, the love of his life.

On January 6, 1632, Wentworth's appointment to the Lord Deputyship of Ireland was announced. The appointment was a cause of astonishment to the public, who could not understand his leaving his beloved Yorkshire, and high and acceptable office, for a country already noted as the grave of reputations. It was the turning-point of Wentworth's career, when most ambitious men would have had little thought for aught save the momentous change in their lives. But it is characteristic of Wentworth's deep devotion to his children that, when announcing the all-important news to Richard Marris, he couples it with an anxious appeal to be remembered by his babies—for Nan and Will were little more.

“On Wednesday last His Majesty was pleased to declare me Deputy for Ireland in open Council and with much grace and favour towards me. You may tell Will and Nan they used to write to their blessed Mother, whilst we were so happy as to have her amongst us, but I never hear from them which I take unkindly from them. I have not so much business, tell them, but I am at leisure to read their letters.”²

A news-writer cynically remarked that Wentworth's ambition had been “wrought upon” by those who wished to keep him at a distance from Court, knowing that there

¹ Fitzwilliam MSS.: Wentworth to Sir Edward Stanhope (?), Dublin, September 12, 1634.

² *Idem*: Wentworth to Richard Marris, December 26, 1632.

was never "yet an officer that hath not been ground at Court, through his absence and the envy of malignant persons".¹ Undoubtedly there was truth in this picture of a Deputy's position, and the King's reasons for making the appointment are easier to grasp than Wentworth's for its acceptance. Ireland, at this juncture, was even more than normally misgoverned, while the Lords Justices at Dublin and the Privy Council at Whitehall were equally perplexed as to where to find funds for the coming year, when the last subsidy should be exhausted. A ruler who, without fear or favour, could lift the entire country out of its morass of corruption, injustice, and disorder was the crying need of the hour. Nor was a financial organiser less needed, for no reforms were practicable until Justices, army, navy, and customs were assured of their salaries. Wentworth's fierce integrity and organising genius were qualities not habitually combined in the English officials of that period. If anyone could retrieve a chaotic administration it was he alone of Charles's counsellors, since in the north he had proved his financial ability by raising the royal revenue from £2000 to £9500. *and his own?*

It is a curious fact that the only minister for whom Charles ever showed affection was the flamboyant Buckingham, the comrade of his salad days. He used Wentworth but he never treated him as a friend. Perhaps Wentworth's commanding qualities may actually have told against him with the King, who, like many pinchbeck natures, was haunted by the dread of seeming to be prompted by others. Indeed, it was not until the ship of State was almost on the rocks that Charles was driven to rely on Wentworth. Thus, in sending him to Ireland the King was conscious of no personal loss. Affairs in England did not then wear a menacing aspect; peace was made with France and Spain, and it was hoped that the country

¹ *Hist. MSS.*: Denbigh MSS., vol. i. p. 8.

would rally from its economic depression. Charles and Laud had not yet stirred up rebellion in Scotland. Opposition to the personal government in Church and State had not yet matured. If not enthusiastically loyal, the great mass of subjects appeared passive. Undoubtedly Wentworth could be spared from England, where neither personally nor politically was he necessary to the King, whereas a strong Governor could alone retrieve the situation in Ireland.

It is obvious from the precautions he took to guard himself from insidious attacks that Wentworth did not underrate the dangers confronting him across the Channel. Perhaps it was those very dangers which attracted him. The cleansing of Augean stables offers a distinct lure to spirits intolerant of misrule and oppression. There was one thing Wentworth could not do. He could not lie. Therefore we may believe that he was speaking the truth when he wrote:

"I confess I am infinitely ambitious to serve the King acceptably, but not at all covetous of the least Benefit inward to myself, which I will make appear an undeniable Truth, through the whole course of this imployment and to the consciences of those Persons that love me least."¹

In a letter to Portland, the Lord Treasurer, he enlarges pathetically enough on these motives which constrain him to leave the security and well-being of the Manor House at York for the Siege Perilous at Dublin Castle. He did not require office to repair a broken fortune, and his highest ambitions were laid to rest by his appointment. Yet, when all was reckoned up, he confessed that it seemed to turn to dust and ashes.

"God knows, how little delight I take in the outwards of this Life, how infinitely ill satisfied I am with myself,

¹ *Letters*, vol. i. p. 87: Wentworth to Secretary Coke, June 3, 1633.

to find daily those calm and quiet Retirements, wherein to contemplate some things more Divine and Sacred than this World can afford us, at every moment interrupted through the importunity of the Affairs I have already.

"To Heaven and Earth I protest it, it grieves my very Soul, and that it is nothing but Love (if I may be admitted a Word of so near a Distance and of so little Courtship) to the Persons of His Majesty and yourself that could make me take up this Yoke and follow."¹

"Calm and quiet Retirements" seem strangely inconsistent aspirations for so untiring a spirit as Wentworth's. But for men highly strung, lovers of books and Nature, the ceaseless demands of administration, the perpetual striving with mean and beggarly elements must occasionally constitute an almost intolerable strain. The very complexities of his being, which make Wentworth an interesting psychological study, helped to give him his incomparable grip on affairs in his own hour and day. And it must be remembered that when he wrote these lines, he was under the shadow of a loss which to the end of life haunted his mind and heart. Nevertheless, as has been said, a year after Lady Arabella's death he married again, though the marriage was not declared until some eight months later, when he rejoined his bride in Dublin.

Wentworth's third wife was Elizabeth Rodes, the daughter of Sir Godfrey Rodes and Ann Leuknor, a granddaughter of Judge Rodes, who made so great a fortune by the law that he was able to establish his "secondary eldest son", Sir Godfrey, at Great Houghton.² In point of worldly position Elizabeth Rodes was not the equal of Lady Margaret Clifford or Lady Arabella Holles. But it seems that this was an actual recommendation to Wentworth. Matrimonial alliances were apt to be governed by severely business-like considerations in the seventeenth century,

¹ *Letters*, vol. i. p. 79: Wentworth to Lord Treasurer, York, October 21, 1632.

² Hunter's *Yorkshire*, vol. ii. pp. 129-30.

much as they are to this day in Continental countries, and from a letter of Wentworth's to Laud, he followed the practice of his generation in his courtship of Elizabeth. In spite of the secrecy of his marriage something must have transpired, for Laud evidently considered that it would be well that a friendly hint should convey to Wentworth that his relations with Mistress Rodes were exciting comment.

"My Lord Cottington was laughing", he wrote, "and asked me whether you were married. He laughed. But in sober earnest, I think it had relation to a report, which God knows who raised, and which they who love you not make sport with, that is that you have just [secured] a pretty nurse for your children, and what this report will [come] to I do not know, but I esteem you will look to it. And pardon this priestlike freedom."¹

The "priestlike freedom" met eventually with a perfectly frank answer.

"Could I have thought fit to have troubled you with women's matters", wrote the Deputy, "none should have had an accompt of my wife sooner than your Lordship. Indeed, married I am, and have no cause to repent it, I thank God. Yet if I had had two sons I would never have made myself incapable of a Bishopric by my Trigamy, but being left by my last (passing noble and discreet one) soe single, I thought fit to put mysefe in the way to continue the Honour His Majesty hath bestowed upon my family. And yet in the least prejudice to my Son that could be, calling to counsell those affections I shall ever preserve for her that is with God, which persuaded me to marry a Gentlewoman, without disparagement either in blood or Education, than to match with a larger fortune that would have consequently taken a great piece of my estate from the other's eldest son, the heir of my house. To God's good blessing must I leave all, and I humbly

¹ Fitzwilliam MSS.: Laud to Wentworth, October 1, 1632.

thank your Lordship for your good wishes unto me in their success.”¹

Though Wentworth's motives may strike us as austere utilitarian, all evidence goes to show that he was an affectionate husband to his young wife. And reading between the lines of his letters, it is evident that in Elizabeth Rodes he found a meek and dutiful helpmate, slightly overcome, at first, by the honour done her by the Lord President. Wentworth's children were no less happy in their stepmother than he proved to be in his wife. That she was unfeignedly fond of the little band is shown in a letter to Marris, Wentworth's steward, in which she thanks him for giving her news “of the well-being of those sweet babes, who are as dear to me as to him whose owne they are, however the world doth answer those that are in my condition”.² Nor was this an empty phrase, for in his last letter to his son, Wentworth tells him to “be sure you give all respect to my wife that hath ever had a great love unto you, and therefore will be well becoming unto you”.³ Another letter of Lady Wentworth's to Mr. Marris, which must have been written after the death of her baby son, “litell Tom”, deserves to be quoted for the impression of steadfast sweetness it conveys.

“Good Mr. Marris—I thanke you very kindly for your religious advice which comes very seasonably to me, whose piercing sorrows, like Job's messengers, come thicke upon me; but we know the path of all God's servants is through many tribulations. I doubt nott therefore but I am in the right way, and this is an antidote against sad thought, for why should not I bee cheerfull, whose every minute draws me nearer to my happiness; and gives me full assurance

¹ Fitzwilliam MSS.: Wentworth to Laud, Dublin, September 9, 1633. Wentworth obtained his wish, a son, “litell Tom”, who died, however, in early infancy.

² *Idem*: Elizabeth Lady Wentworth to Mr. Marris, June 1.

³ *Letters*, vol. ii. p. 416: Strafford to his son, The Tower, May 11, 1641.

that I shall ere long enjoy the God of comfort, which I thank God is all I aime att. I have therefore concerning ye best things an unshakable deale of comfort, especially in little Nan, who is, I thank God, very well; and I hope I shall still enjoy her, which I shall account as great a blessing as can in this world befall mee, and little Dick I heare is well too. Thinke not therefore I will dwell on sorrow, for you see I am already removed from sadness, fixing my thoughts wholly on my comforts where they shall by God's goodness rest. I thank you Sir," she concludes, "for your dainty fruit. I pray you tell Mr. Brewer for the honour of Wood garden, these pears (?) are twice as bigge as my Lord of Newcastle's; I shall desire you to give him this token from me."¹

After Strafford's death the poor lady, and Margaret, her only surviving child, retreated to the Wentworth Dower House at Hooton Roberts, where within memory of man fragments of the black hangings which had draped the walls as mourning for her husband could still be seen round the cornice of the hall. There she lived through the Commonwealth and the Restoration, dying on the eve of the Revolution of 1688. In her will she desired that no stone or escutcheon should mark her grave—a curious proviso for that period, though in keeping with the humility which would seem to have been part of her being.

Curiously enough, though Elizabeth's letters to the steward are preserved, I failed to discover any to Wentworth. But, on the other hand, several letters exist addressed to her by Wentworth, including the first epistle of the bridegroom to his bride.

"Madam," wrote Wentworth, "I have in little much to say to you and in short terms to profess that which I must appear all my life long, or else one of us must be much to blame. But in truthe I have that confidence in you and that assurance in myself, as to rest secure the fault will

¹ Fitzwilliam MSS.: Elizabeth Lady Wentworth to Mr. Marris (undated).

never be made on either side. Well then: this little and this much, this short and this long which I drive at, is no more than to give you this first written testimony that I am your husbände, and that husbände of yours that will discharge those duties of love and respect towards you which good women may expect, and are justly due from good men to discharge them with a hallowed care and continual perseverance in them: and this is not only much, but all which belongs me; and wherein I shall tread out the remainder of life which is left me; more I cannot say; nor perform much more for the present, the rest must dwell in hope, until I have made it up in the balance that I am and must be noe other than your loving husbände
WENTWORTH."¹

So far the moralist. Then the practical man to whom no homely detail comes amiss.

"If you will speak to my cousin Radcliffe for the paste I told you of for your teeth, and desire him to speake to Dr. Moore in my name, for two pottes of it and that the Dr. will see it be good, for this last indeed was not soe, you may bringe me one downe and keepe the other yourself."

It is a pathetic touch that on the back of this letter a "delicate female hand" has written:

"Tom was born the 17th of September being Wednesday betwixt two and three o'clock and was Christened on the 17th of October 1634".²

As already said, we do not possess the lady's answer to this epistle, but, judging from Wentworth's reply, Besse's letter must have been couched in the strain of the beggar maid to King Cophetua.

"Dear Besse—Your first lines were wellcum unto me and I will keep them in regard I take them to be full as of

¹ *Biographica Britannica*: Wentworth to Lady Wentworth, York, October 30, 1632.

² Browning, *Life of Strafford*, p. 121, n.

kindness, soe of truth. It is no presumption for you to write unto me, the fellowship of marriage ought to carry with it more of love and equality than any other apprehension, soe I desire it may ever be betwixt us, nor shall it breake of my parte. Vertue is the highest value we can sett upon ourselves in this world, and the chiefe which others are to esteem us by. That preserved, we becum capable of the noblest impressions which can be imparted unto us. You succeed in this family two of the rarest ladies of their time; equall them in these excellent dispositions of your minde and you becum everywayes equally worthy of anything that they had, or that the rest of the world can give. And be you ever assured to be by me cherished and assisted the best I can throw the whole course of my life, wherein I shall be noe other to you than I was to them, to witt

“Your lovinge husband

WENTWORTH.”¹

We cannot judge the men of Wentworth’s age by the conventions and principles which govern the modern world; yet it is doubtful whether human nature has so changed with the centuries that, at any period, a young wife would be incited to “vertue” by her two predecessors being held up to her as ensamples. Nevertheless, as has already been said, the marriage seems to have been happy, though Wentworth’s reasons for keeping it so long shrouded in mystery have never been disclosed. Mr. Bagwell is probably right in ascribing the fact of her being hidden away in Dublin Castle, until Wentworth’s arrival, to his well-grounded fear that a young, inexperienced bride would be made the centre of intrigues, which would add to the difficulty of his position. But between October 1632 and July 1633 there was time to present the new Lady Wentworth to his friends in England. Laud was evidently relieved when the marriage was acknowledged. In October 1633 he writes:

¹ *Biographica Britannica*: Wentworth to Lady Wentworth, November 19, 1632, York.

"I heartily wish you and your Lady all mutual content that may be; and I did never doubt that you undertook that course but upon mature consideration, and you have been pleased to express to me a very good one, in which God bless you and your posterity, though", he adds, "I did not write anything to you as an Examiner."¹

Wentworth was too well aware of the dangers run by the absent at Court to allow himself to be "ground". On February 17, 1632, the Deputy's "propositions concerning the Government of Ireland" were approved by His Majesty in Council and solemnly entered on the Register.

The lack of funds probably made it easier for Wentworth to obtain the safeguards he deemed essential. The King agreed that none of his servants should be suffered to move an "Irish suit by way of reward" until the Irish revenue was cleared of debt, and that no grant regarding Ireland should pass the Secretaries, Signet, Privy Seal, or Great Seal without the Deputy's assent.² Complaints of injustice or oppression in Ireland were not to be entertained in England, unless it "appear that the Party made his first address to the Deputy". No new offices were to be created without Wentworth's sanction, and he was to have a free hand in the nomination of places on the Civil and Military Lists.

When these "instructions" were entered on the Privy Council Register, Wentworth may well have hoped, in his own phrase, that the chief "postern" to intrigues was bolted and barred.

To make security doubly sure, however, in the vital department of finance, he stipulated privately that all questions regarding the Revenue should be addressed to the Lord Treasurer, instead of to the Commission on Irish affairs. Since the majority of Councillors were not indif-

¹ *Letters*, vol. i. p. 124: Laud to Wentworth, Lambeth, October 14, 1633.

² *Idem*, vol. i. p. 65.

ferent to the personal profit to be derived from Ireland, Wentworth desired to reduce the number of "jobs" which might be demanded of him. For the same reason probably he arranged that his official correspondence should be limited to Secretary Coke. Courageous though he was, for his work's sake, no less than for his personal safety, he was determined to lessen the opportunities of being stabbed in the back.

It was this latter method which had been the cause of his predecessor Lord Falkland's disgrace, and doubtless the episode had conveyed its warning to Wentworth. Nor can he have been unaware of the corrupt and self-seeking nature of the Cabal known as the Irish Council, since he took good care to provide himself with men on whose integrity and loyalty he could rely. The two on whom he mainly counted were his kinsmen, Christopher Wandesford and George Radcliffe. Wandesford, Wentworth's Master of the Rolls, so endeared himself to the Irish people that when he died, at the time when everybody and everything connected with Strafford was under eclipse, his daughter proudly notes that the "keening" or "lamentable hone" never heard before at an Englishman's funeral was cried at his burying.¹

Radcliffe was a single-minded being, and a good lawyer into the bargain, since he received compensation for the loss of his English practice at the rate of £500 a year—a considerable sum in those days. For the "support" of these able and honest gentlemen and their

"assistance in this Government and comfort to myself amidst this generation, I am not able," Wentworth wrote from Dublin, "sufficiently to pour forth my humble acknowledgments to His Majesty. . . . Sure I were the most solitary man without them that ever served a King in such a place."²

¹ *Autobiography of Mrs. A. Thornton*, p. 26.

² *Letters*, vol. i. p. 194: Wentworth to Lord Treasurer, January 31, 1633.

At Wentworth's urgent request, Philip Mainwaring, a Cheshire gentleman, who had sat in Parliament, was appointed to the post of Private Secretary. It is he who is seen in Vandyke's famous picture, writing at Strafford's dictation.

Although Wentworth's appointment as Deputy dated from January 1632, he did not cross to Ireland until July 1633. During that long period he was gathering the threads into his hands, and acquainting himself with conditions across the Channel. The letter from the Lords Justices describing those conditions was certainly calculated to alarm all but the boldest of prospective rulers.¹ It is one of the historical documents of that country and period that best repays study. The Lords Justices report that His Majesty's magazines are ill-equipped, that piracy is rife on the coasts, a hundred inhabitants of Baltimore having lately been carried off into slavery by Algerines, that only £13,715:2:1 $\frac{3}{4}$ remains of the £120,000 subsidy promised in 1628, and that when in December pay-day fell due the Army bills would run short by £1307:12:6 $\frac{1}{2}$.

The Justices were not unnaturally filled with consternation at this prospect, for, as they stated, "we may not advise the lessening of them (the troops) to a fewer number than they now stand". Nor were they unduly nervous, since serious trouble was said to be brewing amongst the transplanted septa in Kerry, trouble due to the non-performance of the undertakers' contracts. Mixed with truly alarming items were announcements that the "three Pursuivants attending this State ever since the King's accession had not received the scarlet coats and Royal Arms necessary for the honour of His Majesty", while, most piteous of all complaints, the nobility, Bishops, and Councillors were deprived of their accustomed "Import wines".

The Lords Justices assured Wentworth that they "do

¹ *Letters*, vol. i. pp. 67-70: Letter of the Lords Justices to Wentworth, Dublin Castle, February 26, 1631/32.

most gladly embrace the choice His Majesty hath made of your Lordship to succeed us in this Government". But Ireland was not too distant from Yorkshire for some inkling of the manner of man he was to have reached them, and it is amusing to note the stress they laid on the decayed condition of the Castle in Dublin, "especially in the parts which are used for the Deputy's habitation, the ruins whereof are no sooner repaired in one part than they become defective in another". They also loudly bewailed the inadequacy of the sum, 1500 pounds *Irish*, set aside yearly for repairs, and practically absorbed by allowances and house-rents to officials and pursuivants. Further, since the Church of St. Andrew, which had been used for the vice-regal stables, was now to be restored to its original use, shelter for Wentworth's horses was still to seek. Since Wentworth was known to insist on a decent measure of state they probably thought that this prospect was not likely to attract him, the rather that the absence of funds made it dubious whether he would succeed in raising, as they suggested, sufficient money for "Concordatums and Extraordinaries".

It is a common human infirmity to impute ourselves to others. This lamentable, and, it must be admitted, perfectly truthful picture of affairs in Dublin would certainly not have quickened their Lordships' advent to a ruinous Castle, where a variety of harassing problems awaited solution. In judging Wentworth by themselves, they were, however, singularly guilty of miscalculation.

The foremost Lord Justice was the Earl of Cork, whose private letter to Wentworth followed close on the official despatch, and, considering the future relations of the two men, makes curious reading.

After remarking that he renders up the Government "in a faire condition", this masterful mortal, with equal veracity, adds that he

"never thirsted after high employments, and therefore, the more willing I shall be to retire to my former Cuntrie life, and there and in all places most readie to receive and obey your commands. I cannot esteem it the least of my misfortunes that I could not be soe happie when I was last in England, and spent some tyme about the Court, as to be made known to your Lordship, of whose virtues, worth and great abilities so much good was liberally spoken. . . . His Majesty's House of the Phoenix, upon receipt of your Lordship's first letters, was by me presently yielded up unto Mr. Hull, and soe are the meadows now as your Lordship hath directed. . . . And for such matters as fall within your observances . . . to be imparted to your Lordship and prepared for, before you come there, the Lord Chancellor and I in our letters have advised you of his regiment. And now seeing God hath soe wrought as to give you the Government over us I, for my part, am most comforted therein, and will faithfully bestowe the best of my service and experience to make it prosperous in your hands."¹

On his appointment, Wentworth had written to the Lords Justices asking for "seasonable advice".² In reply, the Master of the Wards, Sir William Parsons—who was to acquire an unenviable notoriety in later years—begged him to "suspend resolutions" until he could come over and judge for himself. The advice would have been sound if Wentworth could have trusted the Council; as it was, long before his arrival, he was driven to protest, since the Lords Justices not only kept back a letter from the King of "exceeding much weight, denying copies to all men",³ but, in flat disobedience to the royal commands, paid Sir Francis Cook his arrears and at the same time carefully omitted to send a detailed account of the Irish revenue.

¹ Fitzwilliam MSS.: Lord Cork to Wentworth, Dublin, March 6, 1631 (O.S.).

² *Letters*, vol. i. p. 63: Wentworth to Lords Justices, Westminster, January 18, 1631/32.

³ *Idem*, vol. i. p. 77: Wentworth to Lords Justices, York, October 15, 1632.

“Believe me, my Lords”, wrote the incensed Governor, “I fear this will not be well taken if it come to be known on this side . . . and pardon me if, in the discharge of my own duty, I be transported, beyond my natural modesty and moderation and the Respects I personally bear your Lordships, plainly to let you know I shall not connive at such a presumption in you thus to evacuate my Master’s directions.”

The Lords Justices had thus fair warning that Wentworth would stand no trifling. Nor can their advice for retrieving the revenue have increased his opinion of their judgement. Their recipe was the perennial one of Protestant rulers in Ireland, the exaction of the shilling recusancy fine imposed on Roman Catholics for non-attendance on Sunday at the Parish Church. Mr. Bagwell attempts to exonerate them by pointing out that it was “a tax Wentworth had made no scruple of levying in Yorkshire”.¹ Vicious in principle as such a tax undoubtedly was, it must, however, be conceded that the conditions in Yorkshire and Ireland were diametrically opposed, and Wentworth was not the person to ignore fundamental differences. He was no fanatic; and he chose the wiser course when he selected a prominent Papist, probably Sir Toby Matthews, to sound Lord Westmeath and other leaders of the Roman Catholics—the immense majority of the population of Ireland.² These negotiations were kept so secret that Lord Cork, the chief advocate of recusancy fines, had no notion that Westmeath was the bearer of a petition signed by his chief co-religionists offering a subsidy of £20,000 to escape the hated levy.³ It must have come as a severe shock to Cork, who was busy signing warrants for imposing the tax, when he was informed that they must be “stayed”. The Protestant wing in the Council

¹ Bagwell, *Ireland under the Stuarts*, vol. i. p. 197.

² *Strafford and Ireland*, by Dr. O’Grady, vol. i. pp. 487-8.

³ Bagwell, p. 197.

failed him. He found himself deserted by Mountnorris the Treasurer, Loftus the Lord Chancellor, and Lord Wilmot the Commander-in-Chief. Though Cork contrived in an underhand way to foment petitions from Cavan and Fermanagh, which denounced the injustice of Protestants being equally assessed with their Catholic fellow-citizens, these appeals fell on deaf ears and the rout was complete.¹ And meanwhile Wentworth found himself in possession of the sinews of war, since with £20,000 he could construct an army, or rather a police force, which would enable him to reduce to order a disordered land.

It is probable, as has been already said, that Wentworth purposely deferred his departure for Ireland in order to see the contested suits of the "Rebels of the North", and the entire status of the Northern Courts, finally settled before he handed over the administration to his Vice-President, Sir Edward Osborne. These objects were now achieved; and although the fact that his deputy was Lord Fauconberg's son-in-law may have softened the opposition fomented by that lord, it is remarkable that the even tenor of justice flowed on uninterrupted in Yorkshire, until the meeting of Parliament. Evidently Wentworth had inculcated some respect for law and order into his turbulent charges.

The next problem which confronted Wentworth—ridiculous as it sounds—was how to get across the Irish Channel. The narrow seas swarmed with pirates. The "Pickpocket" of Dover actually hunted a Dutch merchantman on to the shore near Dublin, gutted her, and calmly burnt her within sight of the Castle.² The Justices were powerless, declaring that the Treasury could not furnish keep for the "5th and 9th Whelps", the two pinnaces assigned for the protection of trade.

In May 1633, Wentworth, growing impatient, de-

¹ O'Grady, vol. i. pp. 489-90.

² Bagwell, vol. i. p. 198.

spatched his household goods to Dublin, with the result that the "Pickpocket" acquired £200 worth of his stores. Great as Wentworth's wrath was at this outrage, it must have been heightened when another pirate, Nutt by name, offered to act as his convoy.

"It were madness", wrote Wentworth, "for me to think of crossing the sea without Captain Plumleigh to carry me and my company over in safety. . . . I should be sorry indeed", he characteristically adds, "if His Majesty's Deputy were endangered through my untimely haste, and what is more, my Master's honour suffer thereby all over Christendom."¹

Nevertheless, so far was he from "studying unnecessary delays" that he spent £700 of his own money to hasten Captain Plumleigh's arrival on the scene of action.

"And now," he says, "as soon as ever I shall have notice that the King's ship is ready to carry me over, I will not stay a minute of Time in this place."

In this farewell letter to Coke he again recapitulates his Credo, assuring Coke, as he had assured Portland, that he hoped to make it plain even to those who loved him least that his future conduct would never be influenced by covetousness of "the least Benefit" to himself. It was a comfort to feel he could apply for advice to "so wise and well affected a friend" as Coke, and he adjured the Secretary not only to assist him—as he knew he would do—when he was right, but likewise by "his seasonable and grave Counsel [to] reduce me when I happen to tread awry". And to show that this was no empty compliment, but that he was in truth laying to heart advice others might think unpalatable, he adds:

"you give me a good lesson to be patient, and indeed, my years and *natural inclinations give me Heat* more than

¹ *Letters*, vol. i. p. 87: Lord Deputy to Secretary Coke, Westminster, June 3, 1633.

enough, which however I trust more Experience shall cool and a Watch over myself in Time altogether overcome; in the mean space, in this at least it will set forth itself more pardonable, because my Earnestness shall ever be for the Honour, Justice and Profit of my Master, and it is not always Anger, but the misapplying of it, that is the Vice so blameable and of disadvantage to those that let themselves loose thereunto."

No ethical proposition could be better stated or be more uncontrovertible. Yet human nature being the faulty thing it is, vicarious wrath is perhaps the most dangerous as certainly it is the most insidious form of anger. The man who would feel ashamed of losing his temper over his own wrongs has no such compunction when the wrong is done to "God and the King". It becomes part of his bounden duty to resent such crimes of *lèse-majesté*, and thus gradually the conscientious idealist approximates to the fanatic.

CHAPTER XI

MUCH of the blame bestowed on Wentworth by posterity is doubtless due to the fact that the history of Ireland has never been a popular subject. Indeed, to the majority of Anglo-Saxon readers it is actually repulsive. It would be ridiculous to pretend that a bird's-eye view of any nation's social and political origins could be packed into the limited space of a chapter—a task doubly difficult to achieve with regard to a history of “confused noise and garments rolled in blood”, as is that of Ireland. Yet some slight sketch of the causes that produced the conditions which confronted Wentworth is necessary if a critical judgement is to be passed on the great Proconsul, his methods and his aims.

Since Tyrone made his submission to Mountjoy in 1603, peace had nominally reigned in Ireland, but it was the peace of exhaustion. In the eyes of English legists who never recognised the difference between tribal and feudal land-tenure, the flight of the Earls in 1607 and their consequent attainder placed the provinces they had ruled at the King's disposal. The Plantation of Ulster automatically followed. According to the accepted theory of high treason the Earls' personal territories were legally confiscated to the Sovereign, and had James “planted” British overlords, or “undertakers” on their domains, he would have been acting within his rights. Much of the country over which Tyrone and Tyrconnel held sway was, however, tribal, and they governed merely in virtue of

being the tanists of their clans. These lands were in no sense hereditary, and should not have been included with private property. Nevertheless, all was cast into the melting-pot, and a devil's brew it proved.

Greed was undoubtedly one of the elements in the partitioning of lands between the new settlers. Yet, when philosophers like Bacon were convinced that plantations were needful to educate and reform the population, it is only fair to admit that the statesmen of that period had some excuse for attempting to remodel a countryside which notoriously lagged far behind elementary civilisation.

Perhaps it is asking too much of human nature at any epoch to expect such a tremendous scheme of expropriation and resettlement to be carried through without arousing bitter resentments and causing cruel individual hardships. In the seventeenth century, and in Ireland of all countries, the machinery for such a transformation was absolutely lacking. The surveyors, who worked under the protection of armed guards, returned surveys which had scant pretensions to accuracy—consequently favouring the land-grabber. Even the well-meant efforts of the Government ran contrary to native customs. Thus it was inevitable that any administration worth the name should wish to bring the vast tracts of waste land under the plough; but these efforts found no favour with the chiefs, who could more conveniently collect their rents in the form of a cow tax, or with the “mere Irish”, who preferred “creaghting” or cattle-herding to the labour entailed in cultivation. Again, the natives preferred to hold leases rather than to become freeholders, since freeholds carried the obligation of serving on juries. Yet, if the Plantation had been carried out with scrupulous fairness and consideration for the customs of an alien and backward race, it is possible that peace and deliverance from “cess”, “coigne”, and “livery”—the exactions of their chieftains

—would have reconciled the clansmen to the new order of things. And the rise in value of their properties which ensued on Plantation settlements would have atoned to the chiefs for the loss of their semi-tribal, semi-feudal rights.

On their side, the “undertakers”, who with their tenants were to be exclusively British, often found their contracts onerous, since these included the building of stone houses and the arming of their tenants. In the scattered agricultural holdings many of the stipulations of the original covenants broke down. Want of imported labour brought about the resettlement of native tenants. Creaghting, or pasturing, rents were high, while a shortage of hands and tools forbade immediate or rich crops. Therefore the creaghting rents offered by the natives were accepted by those very farmers who had been brought to Ireland to instruct the natives in the arts and crafts of agriculture, and the fortalices which should have risen on every plot of 2000 acres were few and far between.

The emigrants had the best chance of survival when towns and villages formed centres of settlement. The London Corporation’s undertaking, backed by capital, was attended by prosperity from the first. Towns like Coleraine came rapidly into being, since farmsteads and dwelling-houses huddled round their walls for protection from the “cruel wood kernes”, the landless men, the “terror by night” of the settler.

On the whole, the Scottish “undertaker” made a greater success of his venture than the Englishman. The long peace under Elizabeth had not prepared the latter for the uncertainties of existence across the channel. North of the Border, life was harder and resembled more nearly the conditions of Ulster. And with the Scot came his minister, who was so deeply to influence the character of the northern emigrant.

The reformation of the native "superstition" by Presbyterian or Anglican, another object of the Settlement, did not follow on the introduction of the Protestant element into Ulster. James reserved a proportion of lands for Church and Bishops, but clergy who could not speak the language were not likely to carry much weight with their flocks. The Scots, who far outnumbered the English, were stout Presbyterians, or rather anti-Episcopalians, though they intermarried with their Papist neighbours far more than the English. Meanwhile, it must be admitted that, until Strafford undertook its reorganisation, Romanists and nonconformists had cause to despise the so-called Established Church. As usual, money, or rather the lack of money, was responsible for the deplorable character of the Anglican ministry and the condition of their tumble-down churches. Before the Reformation, the wealth of the religious houses was enormous. In 1536 it was calculated to be four times greater than the revenue Henry VIII. drew from Ireland.¹ The Irish barons, however, proved themselves no less ready than their noble contemporaries in England to help themselves to abbey lands. After abbey lands came Church lands. When Wentworth appeared on the scene, these were being devoured piecemeal by the gentry and their natural trustees. Had the "Grace" which Charles I. was stampeded into granting, that grace which conferred fixity of tenure after sixty years' possession, become the law of the land, her last endowments would have been filched from the Church. It should be added that the laity were gleefully assisted and abetted by their spiritual pastors and masters. Through the successive Tudor reigns, the occupants of the Episcopal Bench were Vicars of Bray on a big scale. Perhaps Miler Magrath remains the outstanding instance of this type of ecclesiastic. Beginning as a friar, he ended as a nominally

¹ O'Grady, vol. i. p. 396.

Protestant Archbishop, holding three bishoprics. Twice married, each time to Roman Catholics, the revenues of his sees enabled him to provide handsomely for a host of children as well as hangers-on and horse-boys—a motley crew, since even a kern charged with murder was inducted into a cure of souls. Naturally, in the circumstances, the churches were in ruins and the “hungry sheep looked up and were not fed”. James had known strange doings in Scotland, but this state of affairs surpassed his previous experiences, and he ordered a prosecution of the old pluralist.¹ Miler retorted by threatening to be reconverted to Roman Catholicism. Whereupon, the Provincial of the Irish Franciscans instantly offered a testimonial of good character to the renegade friar, and the Vatican followed suit by promising a reception *con carità*. The Irish Government could not face such a scandal. Miler could, moreover, have stirred up endless strife in the new Plantations. Consequently, he was left to enjoy his ill-gotten gains in peace, and even in honour, dying a short time before Wentworth’s advent.

That “wicked Milerio”, as Strafford called him, is perhaps an extreme instance of the eccentricities of the Irish Episcopate. In a country rent as Ireland was during the Elizabethan era by civil war, famine, and pestilence, the abnormal is apt to become the normal. As Laud wrote, “the wars and their noise stunned the Church”.² Under James sporadic efforts at reform began. Ussher, a good man and a great scholar, was that monarch’s appointment. Nevertheless the standard for Irish Bishops was not generally higher than when Swift ironically declared that, at Blackheath on their way to Ireland, their Lordships must have changed into the notorious highwaymen who infested the road. Laud had reason to write: “I protest I am almost

¹ O’Grady, vol. i. p. 460, quoted from *Archivaria Hibernica* at Maynooth.

² *Letters*, vol. i. p. 124; Laud to Wentworth, Lambeth, October 14, 1633.

ashamed of my calling, I hear and see my brethren are so bad".¹

Like the fine gentlemen landlords of the eighteenth century, many of the prelates were unrepentant absentees. Mrs. Montgomery, reporting that her husband had been appointed to three Irish Bishoprics by James I.—dioceses with such outlandish names that she can merely recall that of Derry—remarks: "I hope we shall not long stay in Ireland, but *once* he must needs go".² Absenteeism was not always a matter for regret, since beyond participation in political work and setting their courts in motion, their Lordships' activities were distinctly circumscribed. And though a heretic Bishop's excommunication was a *brutum fulmen*, the Bishop's court, backed by his prison, was sufficiently formidable. Indeed, absence from their dioceses, if it had entailed the migration of their deputies and the closing of the said courts, would frequently have been a positive blessing. For the Church officers and the men to whom the Bishops and the clergy farmed their revenues were sometimes little better than vampires. Bedell's own Archdeacon was a living confirmation of the medieval theory that no ecclesiastic of that particular rank could attain to heaven. The good Bishop was outraged on discovering that this deputy was known by the nickname of "Pouke"—or "Puck"—owing to the malicious tricks he played on the Irishry. Bedell spent time and money in efforts to dislodge this bloodsucker from his post. He failed. In that age, "criminous clerks" were practically irremovable, and Bedell was reduced to attending the court himself to restrain his subordinate.

The pluralism which vexed Bedell's righteous soul was undoubtedly a hindrance to decorous Church government,

¹ Laud's *Works*, vol. vii. p. 69: Laud to Wentworth, April 12, 1634.

² Bagwell, vol. i. p. 68, quoted from *Trevelyan Papers*, Camden Society, part iii., May 20, 1603.

and since transport scarcely existed, non-residence multiplied difficulties for an overseer. Yet the most ascetic Bishop could not have contrived existence on five marks a year, the revenue of Cloyne, known as the Bishopric of *quinque marcorum*. Aghadoe brought in less than £2; while in comparison the Bishop of Ardfert could be held "passing rich" on £60 a year. Uncompromising as they generally were, even Laud and Wentworth had to acquiesce in a certain measure of pluralism.

As already pointed out, it would be a mistake to imagine that the spoliation of the Church was directly traceable to Catholic resentment of Protestant rule. The spoliation began before the Reformation, and was accelerated by the chaos which overwhelmed Ireland. Secular property had some protection in owners and their heirs. Ecclesiastical property had none. Dr. O'Grady is justified of his hard sayings when he writes:

"Nepotism, corruption, simony, intimidation alienated them (Church properties) to lay hands. Lastly, popular opinion regarded it as legitimate prey. What the Inland Revenue is to the Tax payer, what an Irish demesne land is to the landless man, what the funds of a Poor House are to a Ward politician, that the Church in Ireland was to all classes, all creeds, all races—to everyone."¹

In the Ulster Plantation James handed over 76,000 acres to the Church. Seven years later the Bishop of Derry's income had sunk from £1000 to £400. To remedy the ceaseless leakage, the King issued a Proclamation which forbade the passing of leases for a longer term than twenty-one years. Had this measure succeeded, James would have deserved the title of the British Solomon. Unhappily, bounds are not so easily set to human greed. Nevertheless, the Proclamation made it possible for a courageous Deputy to challenge the monstrous system

¹ O'Grady, vol. i. p. 470.

evolved by secular impropiators of ecclesiastical property. Though the name of these predatory gentlemen was Legion, the head and front of the offending was the great Earl of Cork. He operated on a vaster scale, and more successfully than any of his many rivals in the trade, though, indeed, no great financial cunning was needed for the job. Advowsons were a cheap form of property in Ireland. When the purchase was completed, the patron appointed a "poor, mean clerk" to the living, conditionally on—say—nine-tenths of the stipend being secured to him. The Irish labourer's wage, at that period, averaged £7 a year. Lord Cork could buy dozens of starving curates at £5 a year to discharge the nominal duties of an incumbent, while he pocketed the comfortable surplus of £55.

In these circumstances it was unreasonable to expect that the "learned, painful" ministers, for whom Wentworth yearned, would forsake peaceful England for a wild country, haunted by the "wolf and cruel wood kern", biddable parishioners for an alien and hostile race, speaking another tongue, a dignified church and trim parsonage for a roofless chapel and a miserable hovel. Nothing but the purest missionary zeal could have effected such a miracle. Wentworth was too practical to expect miracles, and consequently bent his energies to the recovery of funds which would enable a respectable and respected clergy to come to Ireland and to remain there.

Meanwhile, in the length and breadth of the land, Roman Catholicism prospered.¹ The Statute of Mortmain operated fatally against gifts or restitution of property to the Established Church. The Church of Rome, however, not being recognised, could sweep legacies and donations into her net. Ireland was one of the very few countries at that period where practical toleration existed. The recusancy fines, indeed, were a sword of Damocles suspended

¹ *Letters*, vol. i. pp. 146-50: Bishop Bedell to Deputy, December 1, 1638.

over the heads of Irish Catholics. But it was a sword that did not fall. Occasionally the authorities organised raids on those religious houses which too openly flaunted their rites and ceremonials. These protests were, however, few and far between. Had they been repeated, there was always the chance that the mob would rise and stone the chief magistrates—as did happen on one occasion in Dublin.

Many Protestant undertakers in Ulster were hand and glove with the priests, who were useful as interpreters and directors of their parishioners. Indeed, according to Doctor O'Grady, who has accumulated evidence on the subject, the influence of the Roman Church and priesthood has never been greater than in the Ireland of that day.¹ The Irish-born friars, trained and bred up at Salamanca, provided an educated or semi-educated element which kept in touch with the natives, whether gentry or peasants. Some were men of genuine learning, while a thin seminary veneer barely concealed the pristine ignorance of others, but either one or the other variety furnished an abundance of chaplains for Roman Catholic houses, and their employers backed them when need arose. So also did the agents of the Derry Corporation, who welcomed them alike as guests to their board and at the Courts, which they practically controlled. Nor were such useful allies allowed to go unrewarded, for dues said to amount to £1000 per annum—a sum exceeding the Protestant Corporation's rent to the King—often fell to their share.

In fact, some of the cooler heads among the recusants were inclined to think that the influx of clerics was overdone. They did not arrive in Ireland thirsting for martyrdom. As Doctor Walsh of Waterford complained:

“Most are unlearned, and make a trade of being ecclesiastical, thereby to live idle, sit amongst the best,

¹ O'Grady, vol. i. p. 465.

go well clad, and if I would say it, swagger. A man cannot sit at table to a raffe of tripes, but presently one or two clergymen come in.”¹

The briefest survey of Irish affairs would be singularly incomplete without a mention of the Presbyterian clergy, who, from the foundation of the Plantation onwards, steadily filtered into Ulster. The extremist wing of the Scottish ministry were naturally attracted to a country where supervision by Church and State was at a minimum. Everything favoured this movement, not least the fact that flitting to Ireland entailed little expatriation for the Scot. The passage from the Lowlands to Ulster was in happy contrast to journeys on the mainland. To go and come from one country to another on a summer's day to hear a popular preacher or to see a friend was the matter of a few hours' sail. How easily it was accomplished is shown by the efforts of the Privy Council in Edinburgh, efforts made yearly and made in vain, to arrest the immigration of Irish mendicants into Scotland.²

James himself, moreover, was inclined to bestow Church preferments on his countrymen; while, in their turn, the Scottish Bishops favoured Presbyters hailing from North Britain. Episcopacy, as tolerated in Scotland, was a different species to the Apostolic Succession cultivated by Laud. There was indeed little to ruffle the susceptibilities of the ministers between 1613-1630, the Golden Age of Presbyterianism in Ulster. Thus, at the outset, the Scottish colony was stamped with the image of Calvin, for the ministers took their duties of exposition seriously. Doubtless, Milton's immortal phrase that "Presbyter is Priest writ large" was amply justified in the case of these "hot Gospellers". Yet if their sway was often as harsh as their

¹ O'Grady, vol. i. p. 467, quoted from Franciscan MSS.

² *Registers Privy Council of Scotland*, vi., xxiii., 1635-37.

doctrine, without their exhortations and austere examples it is more than probable that their congregations would shortly have lapsed into wastrel communities. Their influence can best be gauged by the fact that in many cases they were able to abstain from collecting their dues, without suffering the destitution of the poor parsons they contemptuously described as the "hirelings" of the Established Church.

James's famous aphorism, "no Bishop, no King", certainly applied to these ministers in whose vision of Church Government there was no room for "God's silly vassal". Such a conception was bound to bring the Presbyterians into conflict with Wentworth, who was determined that those who lived by the Church should accept her discipline.

When he announced his "entire filial obedience to the Church", he spoke of that form of Church Government represented by the Laudian school. He had no desire to pry into those mysteries defined by Doctor Johnson as "difficulties vainly curious, and doubts impossible to be solved". In a slightly varying sense, he would have endorsed Pascal's maxim that "qui veut trop faire l'ange fait la bête". He was religious after the manner of many great Elizabethans. The *via media* of the Church of England, expressed in the Book of Common Prayer, with its clear-cut directions for Christian citizenship and service, its happy avoidance of dogmatic subtleties, its exquisite Liturgy and the dignity of its ceremonial was bound to appeal to a mind cast in Strafford's mould. Nor, belonging as he did to the seventeenth instead of the twentieth century, had he any doubt that uniformity of worship would naturally predispose the worshipper to that unity of the spirit which all Churches have ambitioned since the Primitive Church parted company with the Synagogue. In passing judgement on this mental attitude we must remember

that it was the universal conviction of earnest spirits of all denominations at that period; and when we find the Lord's Prayer denounced from the pulpit as idolatrous we can better understand the disgust of common-sense beings for individualism run mad. It was much the same fear of Jacobinism which converted many a Whig to the Six Acts.

The general disorder which obtained in Cork's land of "peace and plenty" was largely traceable to the absence of a police force. In Stuart Ireland, the army should have fulfilled police functions; but though, nominally, the foot stood at 2000, the horse at 400, it had become rather another element of misrule. An unpaid soldiery is naturally driven to live on the country, and the country naturally resents the process. It was a common expedient for the troopers to pawn their weapons to public-houses, borrowing any kind of arms from the natives when they had to parade. The officers were powerless. Money was not plentiful in the Royal Exchequer, but even had it been, an officer who was friends with the Lords Justices would find his legitimate requirements "turned down" by the Vice-Treasurer, who lived at feud with their Lordships.¹ In the circumstances, the majority of the officers found it pleasanter to betake themselves to England. When Wentworth arrived in Dublin, only "half a score" of Captains took the trouble to report to him.

As with the army, so with the law, where again the salaries were inadequate. Wentworth was shocked to find that the Lord Chancellor's services were rated at a mere £400 per annum. Consequently the judges too often indemnified themselves by pickings, while it was notorious that the tyrant of the neighbourhood packed the juries when he and his doings were involved. A particularly lurid light, for instance, is cast on the methods of the Irish

¹ O'Grady, vol. i. p. 6.

Bench by the proceedings of Lord Kilmallock, the Lord Chief Justice.¹

A landowner in Kildare, one Philip Bushin, rich in this world's goods rather than in respectability, was accused of murdering his wife. He was known to have ill-treated the poor woman, and when six weeks after her death and a remarkably hasty burial, he led another bride to the altar, suspicions were aroused. This second lady, an illegitimate daughter of Lord Falkland, he also beat occasionally, but that did not make the case against him seem less black. An inquiry was demanded by public opinion—or gossip—and Kilmallock went down to try Philip Bushin. The witnesses could give evidence only in Irish, but the Chief Justice knew Irish well. Sheltering himself behind his own pronouncement that it was a case of treason, he tried it *in camera*, and refused to admit any evidence on oath for the defence. Yet even with the balance so heavily weighted against him, Bushin was acquitted. No one could be found to swear that the first Mrs. Bushin had died as the result of personal violence. The jury's verdict, however, availed Bushin little, since both the Sheriff, Sir Henry Bellings, and the judge were leagued against him. The jury was rated and fined and another jury empanelled, who proved more tractable, though later they pleaded that they had been intimidated. Bushin was hanged and the Chief Justice and Sheriff divided his estate.

Later it transpired that the first Mrs. Bushin had died not by a husband's heavy hand, but of dysentery. By 1636 enough of the story had become public property to disquiet Wentworth, and he sent Bellings and Kilmallock to England for trial at the Star Chamber. Twelve out of the fourteen judges pronounced them guilty. Both were fined and imprisoned, Kilmallock being deprived of his office and ordered to restore the estate to Bushin's heirs.

¹ O'Grady, vol. i. p. 25.

In 1641 Kilmallock appeared as a witness against Strafford and presented a petition to the King accusing the Lord Deputy of "putting bad people into the Commission of Peace". If Irish history makes grim reading, it undoubtedly has its humorous aspects.

So demoralised a Bench could not inspire Wentworth with confidence, and he speedily set himself to reform and reorganise the judicial machine. The Statutes he passed in his first Parliament diminished the necessity for countless appeals in petty cases to the Council Board which had previously distracted that body's attention from more weighty questions. His most important innovation concerned the Castle Chamber Court. The rule he made of attending these sessions, sometimes as often as four times a week, greatly increased the scope of that Court's jurisdiction, which owed its origin in Tudor times to the need of giving greater leisure for affairs of State to the Privy Council. The Castle Chamber was expressly debarred from overriding Statute or Common Law or from interfering with cases evoked before other Courts of Law. Only where Crown property, *i.e.* Plantations or Church impropriations, were concerned, and then only acting as an arbitrator and with the consent of both parties, could the Court touch land cases. But it gave the Deputy power to hear suits brought *in forma pauperis* by petition. Such cases merely involved a few pounds, a few acres. They were, however, all-important to the humble native, or the sweated parson, who soon became aware that if the Deputy was sitting at the Board the greatest in the land would not be allowed to grind the faces of the poor.¹

"Peace and plenty" reigned as little on the Irish coast as within the interior. Partly as the aftermath of the Spanish Wars, an aftermath unrestrained by the strong hand of authority, piracy was endemic. Many of the rovers

¹ O'Grady, vol. i, p. 31.

were gentlemen of good family, who carried letters of marque delivered to them by the Most Catholic Monarch. These documents entitled them to seize Dutch merchantmen, and since Irish goods were mostly carried in Dutch bottoms, neutral trade was not secured against these ravages.

The splendid harbourage near Long Island Sound, with the facilities Croagh, then called an estuary, afforded for careening, were temptations in themselves to the raiders.¹ The early spring, moreover, found them afloat, while the royal guardships, true laggards, did not appear on the scene till late in the summer, returning early to England to refit. In 1613 one noted corsair commanded a flotilla of nine ships, manned by five hundred seamen, and carrying two hundred and fifty guns. Not the least remarkable feature of this force was that many of these pirates had deliberately installed their wives and families in Ireland to live there at ease, enjoying the support and services of the "land pirates", who made it their business to provision ships and crews. At intervals pirates were captured, and sometimes escorted to the gallows, but more often pardoned, and after a lull their raids began anew. Perhaps one of the worst, from its scale and results, was the descent of a certain Matthew Rice on Baltimore, then a rising Protestant borough. In the dawn of a summer's morning, steered by a native skipper, Rice fell on the sleeping town, sacked the place, and swept off more than a hundred citizens into captivity with the Algerines. Hackett, the pilot who guided Rice, was eventually hanged, but the corsair himself escaped scot-free.² In these circumstances it is not surprising that trade languished, and that His Majesty's revenue was the reverse of satisfactory. Nevertheless other causes than the rovers and their depredations were answerable for much of the shortage in the Customs

¹ Bagwell, vol. i. pp. 104-5.

² *Idem*, vol. i. p. 208.

returns. The Church, the Army, the Law, and the Customs all suffered from one and the same evil—a wage both insufficient and irregularly paid. The gaugers indemnified themselves by levying toll on exporters and importers. Nor were the corporations, who directed the collection of customs, above making bargains with officialdom. In mercantile circles, the evasion of duties was effected by the ancient method of palm-greasing, while the squirearchy regarded the smugglers, who were their accredited purveyors, with peculiar benevolence.

With Ireland tottering on the brink of bankruptcy and chaos, it is not surprising that King and Council—each responsible by their laxity and self-seeking for the situation—should have clutched at any nostrum which could effect even a temporary improvement in the body politic.

Lord Falkland, Wentworth's predecessor, was a weak, querulous being, surrounded by a set of self-seekers. Falkland could get neither money nor moral backing from England, while the difficulty of raising funds might have taxed the resources of a stronger man. When war with France was declared it became obvious that steps must be taken to render Ireland capable of defence, and, with that object, an assembly of notables was summoned in 1627 at Dublin. The outcome of their deliberations was unhappy. The tempers of the Roman Catholics were not improved by a protest of the Protestant Bishops denouncing the toleration of "superstition and idolatry"—the polite formula in their vocabulary for Roman Catholicism. Even without this declaration, Falkland would have had little chance of obtaining his much-needed subsidies. But the refusal he now encountered was categorical; and the English settlers, from whom better things were expected, vowed that rather than have soldiers "cessed" (billeted) upon them, they would throw up their holdings and depart. Seldom, indeed, can a Governor have had more reason for his lamentations.

It must therefore have been an unfeigned relief to Falkland when the Irish agents, sent over by their countrymen to England in May 1627 to negotiate with the authorities, agreed to levy subsidies, spread over four years, amounting altogether to £120,000.

That this agreement, paid for by the so-called "Graces", was a bargain driven between Sovereign and subjects it would be ridiculous to deny. Its repudiation, at a later date, has been one of the charges most frequently urged against Wentworth. But although it is difficult to understand how Charles could reconcile his conscience to the breach of a personal engagement, it should be realised that it was not on a quibble but on definitely legal grounds that Wentworth based his stand. A clause in Poyning's Act, ratified under Philip and Mary, obliged the Lord Deputy to submit any legislation to the King and Privy Council in England before suffering it to be brought forward in the Parliament at Dublin. Nor could he carry the proceedings further until the said proposals were returned bearing the authorisation of the King in Council, and stamped with the Great Seal of England.

None of these precautions had been observed by Falkland, possibly because opinion in the Irish Council was by no means unanimous on the advisability of the "Graces". And though, on purely legal questions, Falkland was entitled to advice from his Lord Chancellor, the fact that he and Lord Loftus were at daggers drawn may partly account for the strange muddle that ensued. Writs to summon Parliament to pass these very measures were actually being issued before the Chief Governor discovered that in the circumstances such legislation would be invalid. The writs were consequently recalled. No Parliament sat and no "Graces" were entered on the Statute Book.

Naturally such confusion and incompetence did not commend governmental methods to the governed. When

taxpayers discovered that the reforms they had purchased had no chance of being passed, the subsidies became increasingly difficult to raise. Nor did it add to the administration's popularity when Falkland, moved probably by the weak man's ambition to show he could take a strong line, issued a Proclamation ordering the dissolution of all monasteries and Romish colleges.¹ It was a particularly silly move, since practically its effect was nil. Indeed, a few months later, seventeen new religious houses were reported to be established in the country.²

In August 1629 Falkland left Ireland. He did not depart in a blaze of glory, for his recall synchronised with the abortive prosecution of the Byrnes, a *cause célèbre* remaining in dispute until the present day, for which he was chiefly responsible.

Here it may be well to say something of the men who in the interregnum between Falkland's exodus and Wentworth's advent had been the so-called rulers of Ireland. The two who had acted as Lords Justices and were personally the most influential and outstanding in character were Richard Boyle, Earl of Cork, and the Lord Chancellor, Adam, Lord Loftus. These dignitaries were on such bad terms that, as a preliminary to their transaction of business, the Council insisted on a formal reconciliation, upon which Lord Cork, who delighted in invoking the Deity, remarked none too hopefully in his diary that he besought God that the Chancellor might observe the armistice "as religiously as I resolve to do, if new provocations enforce me not to alter my resolutions".

The whole story of the Earl of Cork's career reads like a romance. The cadet of a Herefordshire county family, Richard Boyle, who landed in Ireland on Midsummer's Eve, 1588, possessed only of £27:3s., a diamond ring

¹ Bagwell, vol. i. p. 184.

² *Idem*, vol. i. p. 186.

and bracelet, and a change of apparel, had by 1632 become the most powerful financier and landowner of Munster. True, he had come to Ireland at a period when the opportunities for money-making were great. But so also were the risks to life and limb. Astute though he was, Richard Boyle had narrowly escaped shipwreck, and owed his deliverance from wrongful imprisonment—he was wont to declare—solely to the Queen's protection. A typical captain of industry, his virtues and his vices were on a big scale and alike served him well. If he could have given points to Machiavelli in the arts of intrigue, and was no more embarrassed by scruples than Frederick the Great, he was also an exemplary husband and father, a wise organiser, who, if he builded for himself, created prosperity wherever he turned, served in all his multitudinous designs and works by unwearied perseverance, a cool judgement, and a heartfelt conviction that he was the favoured and elect instrument of the Almighty.

The "Great Earl" was the moneylender to whom the nobility and gentry of Ireland habitually applied themselves; and many a title-deed of ancient estates was handed over to Richard Boyle in Christ Church Cathedral at the tomb of Strongbow, which served for his office desk. Yet it must not be concluded that he was the typical usurer greedy of gain at all costs. He declared that he had actually spent £200 to prevent the purchase money for Youghal and the Munster lands being filched from Sir Walter Raleigh, then a prisoner in the Tower. He enjoyed the sensation of his own generosity—and, to be just, must frequently have enjoyed this satisfaction. The towns, Baltimore, Clonakilty, Tallow, Bandon, which he built, the settlements he planted in Munster, prospered as did no other undertakings. "If there had been an Earl of Cork in every county in Ireland", said Cromwell, "there would have been no rebellion." Cromwell was

probably right. So, too, is Mr. Gardiner, that most judicial of historians, when he writes:

"Of that evil class, which under a display of Protestant zeal cloaked its eagerness to use the forms of the law to add field to field at the expense of the Celtic population, Richard Boyle, the Great Earl of Cork, as he was frequently styled, was the most conspicuous."¹

If the verdicts, contemporary and posthumous, passed on this amazing adventurer—for such for good or ill he was—deserve to be recorded, so likewise does his own account of his stupendous fortune.

"I was", he wrote, "but a younger son and a private gentleman when it pleased the Almighty by His Divine Providence to take me, as I may say justly, by the hand and lead me to Ireland."²

The Richard Boyle who revelled in high society reveals himself in these words. He would have been scandalised to feel that he was not on good, indeed, on peculiarly intimate terms with his Maker.

The personage who next to Cork carried most weight at the Council Board was the Lord Chancellor, Adam, Viscount Loftus, who had been associated with Cork as Lord Justice. Thanks to his office, he was practically a permanent official, and thus a permanent force in an administration where the nominal chief and imported stranger was generally a mere fleeting apparition. Naturally choleric, the sense of his irremovability enabled him to indulge his temper to the uttermost, and the violence of his battles with Lord Cork transcended even the dissensions which are supposed to haunt Cabinet boards. According to Lord Cork's own account on one occasion:

"The Lord Chancellor made a long and impertinent speech. I replied I was not of that opinion. His Lordship

¹ Gardiner, vol. viii. p. 33.

² The Earl of Cork's *True Remembrances*.

replied, 'I care not for your opinion'. 'Nor I for yours', quoth I. His Lordship then said: 'I care not a rush for you!' The Deputy told us we were both great officers and prayed us to be quiet, but we, multiplying our unkind conceits one upon another, he then required and commanded us both to be silent."¹

It is a mistake to imagine that bad temper is generally redeemed by honesty and straightforwardness. If the Chancellor was explosive, he was also crafty; and Wentworth was not far wrong when he described him as a "cunning fencer, that smiles and laughs at his fellow in the face, and gives him some blow unexpected".² It was his influence which mainly ruined Falkland. He was, however, so far truthful that he never pretended that his yearly salary of £400 was adequate, nor did he cloak the fact that he looked to other means to supply deficiencies. But when summoned to England to explain these irregularities his triumph was complete, and he returned home a greater personage than ever in his own and others' eyes.

At first Loftus and Wentworth were on good terms. Wentworth, who did not believe in underpaying officials, advocated his being given £300, though he had no illusions about his Chancellor, since he remarked, "it seems he is very good only as long as he is very well pleased".

The Vice-Treasurer, Francis Annesley, Lord Mountnorris, whose prosecution has been generally represented as sheer persecution, was also on fair terms with Wentworth at the beginning of his reign. Mountnorris had married a cousin of Arabella Holles, which probably recommended him to Wentworth, for, when Mountnorris was obliged to hurry back to his post in Ireland, Wentworth was not only profuse in apologies for separating him

¹ *Lismore Papers*, Series I., iv. p. 110.

² *Cal. S.P.*, ii. 180, February 13, 1638.

from "his Lady", then in delicate health, but offered to escort her himself across the Channel.¹

Closer acquaintance did not increase the Deputy's regard for Mountnorris, who, indeed, was an epitome of all the characteristics most distasteful to Wentworth. Money stuck to the Vice-Treasurer's fingers, and he dipped them into any brew which promised perquisites. He was, in fact, the typical social shark of that period, gambling, and generally winning the money of inexperienced youth; while he further offended Wentworth's sense of decorum by his loose conversation, plentifully garnished with oaths. Not the least of his offences in Wentworth's eyes, moreover, was his incessant chatter at the Council Board. "No torment in ye world", wrote Wentworth, "like being tyed fast in a chair and talked to death by a fool", which proves that long before the crash came Mountnorris had got on the Deputy's nerves—with unhappy results to himself.²

The two other most important members of the Council were undoubtedly Charles, Lord Wilmot, joint-President with Lord Ranelagh of Connaught and Commander-in-Chief of the Irish Forces, and Sir William Parsons.

Wilmot had played a considerable part in the Elizabethan civil wars, and under James had been rewarded by grants of abbey lands and a peerage. Already in 1621, however, his action in leasing and alienating Crown lands had been questioned, and, though for a time he seemed to be vindicated, he must have surmised that an active and scrupulous Viceroy would probably require more ample explanations of his transactions. Since he had cherished hopes of filling that high office, he was—naturally—not inclined to welcome Wentworth; and in a long letter to Cottington professing eagerness to "show his obedience",

¹ *Letters*, vol. i. pp. 73-4: Wentworth to Lord Mountnorris, York, August 19, 1632.

² Fitzwilliam MSS.: Wentworth to Laud, March 9, 1635.

he laid bare a sense of injury by declaring himself anxious to turn his back on Ireland,

“for I find the Date of my Fortune in this country is worn out, and Grey Hairs come too fast upon me to hope ever to have it renewed here.”¹

Sir William Parsons knew better how to keep his counsel than the Commander-in-Chief. He was in truth the dark horse of the Council, and Wentworth evidently could not make much out of him. “First and last, the driest man of all the Company”, he wrote.² As time went by, it was noticeable that the dominant party in the Council always reckoned him as on their side. The truth is that his fixed star was his own fortune, for which he fought steadily and by subterranean methods, being best described as the jackal of a band who according to Wentworth were “the most intent upon their own ends that ever I met with, and so as those speed, they consider other things at a very great distance”.³

¹ *Letters*, vol. i. p. 61: Wilmot to Cottington, Dublin, January 6, 1631.

² *Idem*, vol. i. p. 99: Wentworth to Coke, Dublin, August 3, 1633.

³ *Idem*, vol. i. p. 96: Wentworth to Lord Treasurer, Dublin, August 3, 1633.

CHAPTER XII

IT was on July 23, 1633, that Wentworth, after a rough crossing, landed in Dublin, close to the site of the Custom House.¹ Though it was only nine o'clock, and no gun had announced the Deputy's arrival, the "Great" Earl of Cork quickly appeared on the scene, and near Lowrie Hill found Wentworth and a small band of friends and officials, Lord Castlehaven, Sir Francis Cook, and Sir John Borlase, making their way on foot to the City. After welcoming the Deputy, the Lord Justice entreated him to "take the benefit of his coach", an offer which Wentworth and the others accepted, and so, wrote Cork in his diary,

"we came along together to the Castle and so into the withdrawing Chamber, and then his Lordship (I having the precedence) brought me to my Coach. The next day, my Lord Deputy came home to my house and gave me a kind visit."²

Thus at that first meeting nothing but courtesies passed between the future antagonists, nothing to suggest that Cork in that same diary would eventually describe Wentworth "as a most cursed man to all Ireland and to me in particular".

On July 25 the ceremony of installation took place. Up to the moment that the Sword of State was actually delivered to Wentworth, he scrupulously yielded precedence to the Lord Chancellor and Cork; and until the Commis-

¹ Bagwell, vol. i. p. 199.

² *Lismore Papers*, vol. iii. pp. 202-3.

sion was read and Wentworth sworn, the Lords Justices remained enthroned in their chairs of State. The investiture was concluded by speeches from both the ex-governors, who each gave the country, now handed over to their successor, a clean bill of health. "And I for my part", said Cork, "did most willingly surrender the Sword, the rather the kingdom was yielded up in general peace and plenty."¹ Wentworth's own speech, which he pronounced holding the sword in his hand, was well received. And certainly his declaration that he would be no upholder of factions, but would most esteem those who did most for the King's service, was one to which even the carping spirits of that place could scarcely take exception.

On leaving the Council Chamber, the Earl of Castlehaven carried the sword before the Deputy; and when the procession reached the Presence Chamber, Wentworth paused in front of the Cloth of Estate and very deliberately made "two humble courtesies to the King and Queen's pictures, which hang on each side, and fixing his eyes with much seriousness, showed a kind of devotion".² He had gone out of his way before his installation to pay visits to the Lords Justices—an unprecedented honour from the Deputy-Elect. He had done it partly because he was a private person, but also, as he himself says, to show an example to others "what would always become them to the Supreme Governor". His "humble courtesies" to the royal portraits were probably dictated by the same considerations.

At the conclusion of the ceremony the Deputy knighted his brother George, Wandesford's son-in-law, and a youth who hoped thereby to save his wardship at his father's decease. In the Privy Chamber the company found the new Lady Wentworth, to whom her husband duly presented the late Lords Justices, "to be saluted with a kiss from

¹ Bagwell, vol. i. p. 200.

² *Idem*, vol. i. p. 201.

each of them". It must have been something of a surprise to these reverend signiors to find the mysterious lady "who until that instant had no title or place given her here but that of mistress Rhodes", revealed as the consort of their Chief Governor. Lord Cork makes no comment in his Diary on the situation. Nor does he recall the fact that he had offered his daughter's hand to Wentworth, when the latter was already the husband of "Besse", an episode which must have been the first of many surprises administered to Cork by Wentworth.

Here, perhaps, may be the place to say something of Wentworth as he appeared to the world in general. His contemporaries are agreed that he was spare, active, and tall, though stooping from the shoulders, the result of illness, pain, and "overdrudging" at his desk. Lovelocks were as distasteful to Strafford as to Cromwell. His thick, dark, curly hair was cut as short as any Roundhead's, though we may be sure that at no period would any detail of his dress, unlike Oliver's, have been anything but fastidiously neat and trim. It was not only during his trial that he wore black. It was the colour he mainly affected, and it was wearing a suit of black armour and a black feather waving on his casque that the Lord Deputy drilled his troops at Dublin.

Sir Philip Warwick tells us that "whilst he, Wentworth, moved or sat thinking his countenance was cloudy"—a mood we see reflected on Vandyke's canvas. A "proud, glooming countenance", says Baillie; "harsh, dark features" is Macaulay's verdict—neither writer, it must be admitted, enamoured of "Black Tom Tyrant". He himself joked about his "bent and ill-favoured brow", which, he declared, would never make him "prosperous in the service of ladies".¹ Undoubtedly he was not handsome. Henrietta Maria, no mean judge of such matters,

¹ *Letters*, vol. i. p. 178: Wentworth to Lord Exeter, Dublin, Jan. 15, 1633.

was positive on the point, though, in describing him to Madame de Motteville, she added that his hands were perfect—hands which, for once, were faithfully copied from his sitter by Vandyke. Those who looked deeper than the Bourbon Queen—and away from “the beautiful Lord Holland” or gay Harry Jermyn—would perhaps have agreed with Wentworth’s old friend, Lord Exeter, who protested vehemently against the Deputy’s self-disparagement.

“Content yourself”, he wrote, “with that brave commanding part of your face, which sheweth gravity without dullness, severity without cruelty . . . and love without extravagancy.”¹

Exeter, like Sir Philip, knew Wentworth as the many-sided man, who, when not lost in meditation, or moved to wrath, when, in fact, he

“spoke either seriously or facetiously had a lightsome and a very pleasant air; and indeed whatever he then did, he performed very gracefully”.²

A “brave commanding face” is certainly no unhappy description of Strafford. It is the type of countenance which arrests attention and interest, despite rugged and irregular features. Courteous the Deputy was, and at moments charming; the pity was that, as Warwick complains, he seemed to “overlook” so many as he did, since it is undoubtedly true “that a little friendliness and openness of carriage begets hope and lessens envy”. He himself talked of “seeming strictness” and putting on the “Lyon’s skin” as necessary to the King’s service, but graciousness has also its uses, which Wentworth should have known.

The Council Chamber, the Gallery, the Presence

¹ *Letters*, vol. i. p. 241: Lord Exeter to Wentworth, April 1634.
Sir P. Warwick, *Memoirs*, p. 112.

Chamber with its cloth of estate, all suggest surroundings of a palatial nature which were far, however, from being realised. Indeed, the Lords Justices had certainly not misrepresented the condition of the Castle, and its ruinous state fully bore out their gloomy description. Loftus, in particular, had good cause for complaint, since one of the great towers fell down during his tenancy, and it was merely the lucky accident of his grandchildren's absence that saved their lives. An hour later and they must infallibly have been killed.

It was natural for Wentworth with his passion for things seemly and beautiful to have given money, time, and attention to the improvement of his own houses and the King's Manor in York. The importance he attached to such matters is shown by the advice, it will be remembered, he gave to his nephew, Sir William Savile, when he urged him to devote a third of his income to accommodating himself in his houses, and to make them more "suitable to his quality".¹ Neither did he fail to press the same arguments on his royal master. Before sailing for Ireland he besought Lord Carlisle, who was to accompany Charles on the northern progress, to seize the opportunity to further his petitions regarding the President's establishment at York. He calculated that out of the recently enclosed Forest of Galtres a park could be easily laid out which would cost but £2000; and though he hoped Carlisle would find the "residence much mended since my coming to it", £1000 bestowed on a chapel and gallery which he had planned would make the house truly "commodious".

"I beseech you", he said, "to persuade His Majesty that we may also taste of his bounty therein, and albeit we prove a little expensive unto him in these two, I

¹ *Letters*, vol. i. p. 169: Wentworth to Sir William Savile, Dublin, December 29, 1633.

trust we shall advance his Profit much more in other things.”¹

The outlay at York represented additions and improvements desirable, but not vital. The Castle at Dublin required drastic treatment to make it moderately safe for human habitation. As usual, Wentworth lost no time about it. The first thing he did was to pull down a rickety tower. Even then, all danger was not averted, as the rest of the buildings

“are so crazy”, he wrote, “as we are still in fear part of it might fall down on our heads. . . . I am therefore instantly constrained to repair and pull down what would else forthwith fall of itself, it being of absolute necessity to do so; and will withal gain some few rooms more than now there is, the house not being of receipt sufficient to lodge me and my company.”²

Ruinous within, without the surroundings were squalid. The stable, “a poor, mean one”, was jobbed out of a “decayed church”, an arrangement which Wentworth rightly conjectured that the King as well as himself would consider a “prophanation”, since, with the exception of the revenue and recommendations of favourites for posts, the subject of its restoration occupied the largest place in Charles’s correspondence. Stables were therefore a prime necessity; and though they were planned on spacious lines to hold sixty horses and to include granaries, Wentworth, a bare three months after landing, could report that the foundations already stood two yards high. Under his compelling eye, Irishmen had learnt to work well and quickly.

The sixty horses were intended to mount his own troop, “such a troop of Horse, I daresay, as Ireland hath not been acquainted with”. Like the humble courtesies to the royal portraits and the visits to the Lords Justices, Wentworth’s

¹ *Letters*, vol. i. p. 85: Wentworth to Lord Carlisle, May 20, 1633.

² *Idem*, vol. i. p. 131: Wentworth to Coke, Dublin, October 23, 1633.

fine troop was to serve as an ensample—a much-needed ensample—to others. As he himself says:

“I am the more careful to compleat my own troop, that so I may freely call upon other Captains to perform their duties.”

A garden and proper offices, continues the lament, were as far to seek as stables. “The bakehouse in present being just under the room where I now write and the woodcreek just full before the Gallery windows.” At a cost of £150 he hoped, however, to remedy these unsightly features and to provide a garden, and “thus to make the habitation easeful and pleasant as the place will afford. Whereas now”, exclaims the great gentleman, accustomed to the orderly beauty of Wentworth and Gawthorpe, “upon my Faith, it is very little better than a prison.” A letter to his brother-in-law, Lord Clifford, completes the melancholy picture.

“Within doors everything musties as sufficiently in two days as you shall by any art effect in England in two months tyme. Under my windows comes every morning a poore leane mill horse, and here, in a Bogg, croppes a few pyles of grasse, sinking all the whilst as he stands. And by that tyme he is up to the arse and in feare, as I perceive, to goe over head and ears, he gets forward a step or two and then to work again upon his Salett, till he be inforced again to sinke his poore victualls a step or two further whereof the undersedge is up to the arse in Summer. Judge you what this may be in Winter.”¹

Such was the lodging provided for the King’s representative when Wentworth landed in Ireland. Towards the end of his stay, Mrs. Thornton, Wandesford’s daughter, who shared the lessons and games of the Viceroy’s chil-

¹ Fitzwilliam MSS.: Wentworth to Lord Clifford, Dublin, September 28, 1633.

dren, gives a very different account of the Castle. The "chapel chamber" must have been particularly gorgeous, "being most richly furnished with black velvett, imbroidered with flowers of silk worked in tent stitch, all fruit-trees and flowers and ships imbroidered with gold twist".¹

The chapel, where, after Wentworth's advent, the Deputy's pew no longer usurped the place of the altar, was equally magnificent, and new lodgings had also been built for my Lady and the family. Unluckily, however, even Wentworth could not instil carefulness into Irish housemaids. It merely needed that one of these damsels should leave a dust-basket of charcoal embers under a staircase utterly to destroy all this new wing. Indeed, if the alarm of fire had not been given just in time my Lady and the children would have perished in the housemaid's bonfire. They were safely carried out, wrapped in blankets, but Wentworth's architecture, like his rule, ended in ruin and disaster.

The internal economy of the Castle was as little to Wentworth's liking as its structure.² He was, in fact, scandalised by the crowding of "ordinary gentlemen" into precincts which should be reserved only for noblemen and counsellors, and yet more by the thronging of their servants into the Presence Chamber, where evidently they did not always trouble to remove their hats. He begged for distinct orders to remedy these abuses, though he acknowledged that he could himself have dictated these new rules. Evidently he did not wish to be thought "supercilious or imperious" at his outset, and if such rules were thought unnecessary he would be well content that they should be omitted, having, as he remarked, "no such

¹ *Autobiography of Mrs. A. Thornton*, pp. 11-12.

² *Letters*, vol. i. pp. 200-201: Wentworth to Secretary Coke, Dublin, January 31, 1633.

vanity in myself as to be delighted with any of these observances”.

If he desired positive orders for settling minor points of ceremonial and precedence—which he ungallantly described as “womanish weaknesses”—he did not hesitate personally to regulate the drinking which he found almost “epidemical” in Dublin. Drunkenness was a vice he utterly refused to tolerate. “He hateth an ill-conditioned man and drinkers”¹ was the report of a visitor to Ireland.

“Let no company or Respect ever draw you to excess in Drink”—he wrote to his young nephew—“for be you well assured that if it ever possess you, you are instantly drunk to all honour and imployment in the State; drunk to all the Respects your friends will otherwise pay you and shall by unequal staggering paces go to your Grave with confusion of face as well in them that love you as in yourself.”²

Toasts were accordingly strictly limited at his board. Nor were his servants suffered to take gratuities of any kind. For as a shrewd observer records, “if he is very severe in the punishment of offences, so is he careful that as well his family as himself should be exemplar in practice”.³

If bumpers were strictly rationed at the Viceregal table the most censorious could not impute this to miserly housekeeping. Already at York, when persons of quality came to pay fines of recusancy or knighthood, he made it a point of honour to entertain them; for, as he said, he could not “with any decency take money from them with one hand, and turn them into the Town to seek their dinners with the other”.⁴ Keeping open house after this

¹ *Fairfax Correspondence*, vol. i. pp. 250-52: J. Bladen to Lord Fairfax, July 2, 1634.

² *Letters*, vol. i. p. 170: Wentworth to Sir W. Savile.

³ *Fairfax Correspondence*, *idem*.

⁴ *Letters*, vol. i. p. 142: Wentworth to Lord Cottington, Dublin, October 22, 1633.

fashion had cost him at least £500, for which no allowance was made, and in Ireland the reckoning was still more on the debit side. The household expenses of other deputies had averaged £30 a week. Wentworth's food bill cost £70 a week, his troop of horse £1200 a year, and this latter was an innovation, since his predecessors never kept a single horse at their own expense. He had, moreover, a guard of fifty foot, "personable men and well appointed", to attend on His Majesty's Deputy every Sunday, whereas previous Governors had pocketed the allowances for troop of horse and company of foot. Again, they had made £1000 a year out of licences to export pipe-staves—the trade that was destroying Irish forests—while occasionally great "balks of land", or, better still, £10,000 of rewards fell to their share. Wentworth hoped to raise the Crown revenue on pipe-staves to £3000, without "one penny profit" to himself, while as to gifts of territory or cash he very truly remarked, "it will be long before I expect any such things".

Wentworth had registered a vow not to give vent to any opinion on Irish affairs until, after his arrival in Ireland, he could see with his own eyes and hear with his own ears how matters stood.¹ He had, however, sketched out his plans of campaign (for, first and last, Irish administration was a campaign to every Viceroy) and he lost no time in putting these into effect.

The day following his installation he called a formal meeting of the Council and gave notice that in another week he must receive their considered proposals for dealing with the financial problem. Accordingly, on the appointed day the Deputy and his advisers met in consultation—or rather joined issue. He opened proceedings by inquiring how they proposed to raise funds to pay the Army and carry on the administration.² A long silence

¹ *Letters*, vol. i. p. 89: Wentworth to Lord Treasurer, Westminster, June 3, 1633.

² *Idem*, vol. i. pp. 98-9: Wentworth to Coke.

ensued. No one apparently desired to bell any cat. Finally, Sir Adam Loftus suggested that the voluntary contributions might possibly be continued for another year, until Parliament could be called to raise funds and settle disputed titles to land. Silence, "a great silence", once more descended; and Wentworth was fain to call upon Sir William Parsons for his opinion. The request was couched in highly complimentary terms. The King reposed great faith in Parsons, and consequently, said Wentworth, he promised himself much assistance from his affection and judgement. More solid considerations than fair words were, however, needed to move the Master of the Wards, and Wentworth ruefully confessed that he had "answered his expectations very poorly". In fact, Parsons insinuated the unpleasant doctrine that it was doubtful whether legally the Council could budget for the nation, adding that the King's revenue might furnish the greater portion of the Army pay—

"which I know, and he much better", said the exasperated Deputy, "to be altogether impossible. I was then put to my last refuge", he proceeds, "which was plainly to declare that there was no necessity which induced me to take them to counsel in this business for rather than fail in so necessary a Duty to my Master, I would undertake, under peril of my head to make the King's Army ready to sub-sist and to provide for itself amongst them without their help. Howbeit, forth of my respect to themselves I had been persuaded to put this fair occasion into their hands."

The "fair occasion" would certainly not have inspired his Executive—for such was the Council—with the spirit of emulation, had Wentworth not proposed that the petition for a Parliament should be coupled to the offer of a year's subsidy—a petition he would endorse.

"They are so horribly afraid", Wentworth comments, "that the contribution money should be set as an annual

charge upon their inheritances, as they would redeem it at any rate, so as upon the name of a Parliament thus proposed, it was something strange to see how instantly they gave consent to this proposition with all the cheerfulness possible."

Wentworth's first battle with his Executive had thus been won—no small victory, since previously the Council had declared the continuation of quarterly payments to be "a work impossible and beyond any industry". Though he had scant inclination to bribe opponents, he was consequently eager that supporters should be duly recognised. He urged the Lord Treasurer for "a touch of the pen" to Sir Adam Loftus, and carefully enumerated his other helpers, in especial the Chancellor and Lord Mountnorris. As for Lord Cork, though he had remained silent until the wonder-working word Parliament was uttered, he had then declared that the Army might actually be maintained out of the Irish revenue. Had he realised that Wentworth had no intention of legalising the "Grace", which barred all inquiry into a sixty years' possession of property, he would scarcely have been so benignant. But even his shrewd eyes had not penetrated Wentworth's scheme. The next "Labour" which confronted Wentworth was to obtain the Catholics' assent to this offer. That obtained, with payments ensured for a year and a half, he would have leisure to meditate and prepare his administrative plans. Meanwhile, he, Radcliffe, and Wandesford, the only two men he could trust, would tackle the petition for a Parliament to which he implored the Treasurer to obtain a "fair and gracious" answer from Charles before Christmas.

Wentworth had none of the King's distrust of Parliaments. The experience he had gained at Westminster had not been lost on him; and though the compromise he had sought to effect over the Petition of Right had failed, it had failed because Charles was impracticable, not because

Wentworth held no chart to his fellow-members' aims and ambitions. In Dublin it was the Deputy who called the tune, since Poyning's Act put the initiative for legislation—an immense power—into his hands. Consequently, he was no longer dependent on the decisions of a sovereign at once tactless and shifty, weak and obstinate. In Ireland, moreover, Parliament was in its infancy.¹ Elizabeth's last Parliament had consisted of 127 members. James's single Parliament was only approximately representative of the whole kingdom. Boroughs were few, and in these it was easy to effect what a later generation has dubbed gerrymandering. In the older cities the mercantile class held sway. But in these newer boroughs, which sometimes numbered a mere hundred inhabitants, the expense of a member was an onerous burden. Therefore electors welcomed a Government nominee, as both a cheaper and a more efficient protector against bullying neighbours, whether corporations or feudal potentates.²

Despite the brave face he put upon matters, Wentworth was only too well aware that success hinged on receiving a steady backing from the King. It was this support that had invariably fallen short of his predecessors' legitimate requirements, and had delivered them over into the hands of the envious circle of self-seekers who were the Viceroy's executive. Charles, it is true, had made certain promises which constituted Wentworth into a final Court of Appeal, but, from the moment of his leaving the Court, Wentworth must have anticipated that these promises would not long remain unbroken. Almost the first of these undertakings had been the pledge that the gift of commissions in the Army should be vested in the Deputy—a reasonable proviso if that force was to be brought under discipline. Yet Wentworth had scarcely set sail before the King intimated his commands that a company, which, with his entire

¹ O'Grady, vol. i. pp. 91-3.

² *Idem*, vol. i. p. 75.

approval, Wentworth had bestowed on Henry Percy, should be transferred to Lorenzo Carey, the late Lord Falkland's younger son. Lorenzo Carey, the son of a man who Wentworth believed had been his systematic traducer, was entirely untrained and incapable of putting his troopers through their drill. And apart from the choice of the man himself, Wentworth realised that to have his commission overridden at the outset would have the very worst effect in Ireland. Accordingly he protested in no uncertain terms. He pointed out that if all the places in a Deputy's gift were disposed of from England without his thanks or privity, all that would remain to him would be "the empty name; or Ghost of a Deputy General". He would have nothing left whereby to reward any services, and would merely be entrusted with "the Sharp or sour part of Punishment to be exercised upon inferiors with certain disadvantage to myself and Heartburning of such as suffer under it".¹ Nor would he let it be supposed that he had undertaken his present office "to piece up a broken Fortune". His "contentments and ease", he made it clear, were

"not set upon this kingdom. All the end and comfort I take", he concluded, "is to serve His Majesty in some degree (if it please God to grant me his blessing therein) befitting the Honour and Greatness of my Master, the Justice and Goodness he dispenses for his People; so as I confess it torments and grieves me above measure to find myself impaired in that sound Constitution, which might strengthen me to sustain the many Pangs and relapses I look to meet with in this sick Government, being otherwise that considers myself the least I thinke of most that have gone before me in this place."

This well-founded protest crossed one from Wentworth's "Master", which shows on what a broken reed so strong a man as Wentworth had perforce to lean. The

¹ *Letters*, vol. i. p. 140: Wentworth to Secretary Coke, Dublin, October 26, 1633.

object of the royal missive was to recommend two courtiers for pickings in Ireland, as far as might consist with

“the good of my service and no otherwise; yet so too”, continued Charles, “as that I may have thanks howsoever; that if there may be anything to be denied, you may do it and not I.”¹

When Wentworth in the bitterness of his soul had exclaimed that for a man to be driven to enforce obedience solely by punishment, without any power of rewarding merit, was “to be always in Vinegar; while never to communicate of the sweet . . . was the meanest, most ignoble condition any free spirit can be reduced unto”, he had in truth described Charles’s governmental methods.² It seems superfluous to add that all his efforts were vain. Young Lorenzo Carey obtained his troop.

Nevertheless, he could write to Laud, his chosen confidant:

“If we grow faint, our joints double under us at the beginning, how shall we ever attain to the end of our journey; and to faint in the way when [so] faire a prize is before us, as the honour and greatnesse of the best King upon the whole earth, were most shameful and would render us abominable to all posterity.”³

Consequently, as he himself jestingly remarked, with no better defence than “a furred coat and an honest heart”, he set himself to work on the reform of the Army.

The policing force had become, as we have seen, merely an additional element of disorder throughout Ireland.⁴ In 1626 the troops at Cork fell on the Mayor and

¹ *Letters*, vol. i. p. 140: King to Wentworth, St. James’s, October 26, 1633.

² *Idem*, vol. i. p. 142: Wentworth to Lord Treasurer, Dublin Castle, November 4, 1633.

³ Fitzwilliam MSS.: Wentworth to Laud, Dublin, October 22, 1635.

⁴ O’Grady, vol. i. p. 260.

his mace-bearer and trounced them soundly. Nor can this revolt, however deplorable, be regarded as wholly unnatural, since the wretched men were without pay or rations and the City Fathers had refused to allow them "cess". Order was with difficulty restored by one of the provincial governors "roaring" at the mutineers, who worked off their feelings by roaring back.¹ It was lucky that the disturbance was so cheaply allayed, for munitions were often as wanting as rations. In 1629, on Christmas Day, of all festivals in the year, when Cork and Wilmot had drawn a wasps' nest about their ears by raiding a Franciscan monastery, Wilmot, somewhat tardily, discovered that there was not a pound of gunpowder in the Castle, though it was the main depot for stores.²

With funds in hand to pay officers and men, Wentworth could now exact service for salaries punctually paid. His first step was to call absentee officers to book. Many of the captains had farmed out their companies to subalterns, and, living, as they did, dispersed all over the country, had no knowledge of their men.³ Wentworth never believed in merely punishing underlings. On principle he flew at higher game.

"You would smile", he wrote to Cottington, "to see good Sir Thomas Dutton pout whilst I tell him, he hath the worst troop of Horse in all Ireland; he lowers upon me, as if because he killed Hatton Cheek, no man should dare more to call upon him for any duty, tells me it served heretofore, but I think I have satisfied him it must not be so hereafter."⁴

Since the Commander-in-Chief himself, Lord Wilmot, had made as big a profit out of the Army "as the meanest Captain", Sir Thomas Dutton's amazement at being

¹ O'Grady, vol. i. p. 262.

² *Idem*, vol. i. p. 263.

³ *Letters*, vol. i. p. 195: Wentworth to Coke.

⁴ *Idem*, vol. i. p. 144: Wentworth to Lord Cottington, Dublin, November 4, 633.

brought to account was not unnatural.¹ Wentworth initiated his reforms by presenting each captain with a list of the defects in his company, bidding him, at his peril, see these righted within six months, when he intended to review the Army, and to proceed to very severe punishment of such as after so fair a warning were found wanting.² He further instituted weekly parades and a bi-monthly rota of troops to be stationed in Dublin, so that no unit could evade his inspection.

Nor did Wentworth leave the training of his own troop to others. Dublin became accustomed to the sight of the Deputy clad in black armour, with a black plume floating from his casque, mounted on a black horse, exercising his "personable men". Perhaps it was this sable garb as much as his "bent brow" which earned him the sinister nickname of "Black Tom Tyrant". He himself cheerfully declared that his captains would at any rate never dislike him as ardently as they did when he first insisted on their doing their duty "to their loss—but to the honour of the State, for, undoubtedly, I will, after I have brought them into order, carry myself so as to be beloved of them, whether they will or no". And in this at least he was not disappointed, since, except for the officer he threatened with his riding switch for grinning disrespectfully at his orders, accusations put forward by the military do not swell the charges industriously raked together against him at his trial.

It was not only the foot and cavalry which occupied Wentworth's attention.³ Where gunpowder was lacking, naturally, firearms were equally wanting. Out of his own pocket Wentworth advanced £200 to a certain Blagnal and a posse of workmen, reputed "the best in Christen-

¹ Fitzwilliam MSS.: Wentworth to Coke, August 24, 1635.

² *Letters*, vol. i. p. 195, *idem*.

³ *Idem*, vol. i. p. 145: Wentworth to Lord Cottington.

dom and civil and orderly men",¹ whom he imported for the casting of guns, he himself watching the process at Kilmainham and gleefully reporting that they turned out the smoothest and closest grain of metal. He also tried to substitute muskets for the obsolete "calivers", urging the economy of arming the little force *à la moderne*. Here, however, he came up against the proverbial departmental distrust of novelties, reinforced probably by the Tower officials' displeasure at being informed that the swords they had sent over rated at ten shillings were not worth four, while the muskets rated at twenty-three shillings "were not worth anything".²

Although Wentworth supervised the processes whereby the administration was to be got into working order, he was too wise an organiser to lose himself in detail. He begged that Sir John Borlase, an industrious and skilled soldier, might immediately be appointed Master of the Ordnance, remarking that he would not be able to do much besides "if he attend that charge as he ought". This petition was granted. But the Treasury required much pressing before agreeing to pay for Blagnal and his men. Wentworth complained that he was worn out with the poor fellows' clamours, and "run out of purse only to keep them with life and soul together".³ Truly, as Wentworth said, "it was a work of time to meet with all these inconveniences".⁴

The elder service—if the two guardships, the *Antelope* and the *Lion*, deserve so pompous a description—was no more prosperous than the Army, save for the sterling merits of its commanders, Captain Plumleigh and Captain James. Wentworth had scarcely arrived in Dublin before a

¹ *Letters*, vol. i. p. 163.

² *Idem*, vol. i. p. 196: Wentworth to Secretary Coke, Dublin, January 31, 1633.

³ *Idem*, vol. i. p. 163: Dublin, November 24, 1633.

⁴ *Idem*, vol. i. p. 195: Wentworth to Secretary Coke, January 31, 1633.

"Biscayner" carried off a Dutch ship lying at anchor at the mouth of the Liffey. Luckily, Captain Plumleigh was only a league away, and on getting news of the outrage he gave chase, recovered the merchantman, seized her pirate crew, and would have captured the privateer if he had been able to follow her into shallow water. Plumleigh had deserved well of a Deputy who was never slow to reward good work.

"Tomorrow", wrote Wentworth, "before I go to Church, I propose to knight Captain Plumleigh, both to incourage his industry and to incite others to be more diligent in what they go about for the King's service."

According to the popular conception of Wentworth as a heavy-handed despot, he should then and there have consigned the fourteen pirates to the gallows, and seized the merchantman's wares on the ground of her being a royal prize. He did none of these things, but showed immense patience and ingenuity in solving the problems which developed out of Plumleigh's catch.

Wentworth was determined that, in his own words, St. George's Channel should be held

"the chief of [His Majesty's] harbours, within which he would suffer no hostilities to be maintained, or the Trade of his Kingdom disturbed, no more than in his river of Thames".¹

His task would have been simpler if he had not been almost equally anxious to foster good trading relations between Ireland and Spain. With this twin object in view he assured the Spanish Resident, Señor Nicholadie, through Secretary Coke, that henceforward all trespassers would be treated and punished as pirates, yet that if he could obtain a promise that the "Biscayners" would keep clear of the Channel he would be well content to set the prisoners

¹ *Letters*, vol. i. pp. 106-7: Wentworth to Coke.

at liberty. The only exception to this general gaol delivery was one Senet,

“who being His Majesty’s subject and flat piracy proved against him, the World should not save him from the gallows, as indeed one of them that have done us all the mischief; for were it not for such rogues as these”, said Wentworth, probably remembering Hackett and the sack of Baltimore, “the other could not possibly do us any Harm, not knowing our harbours, or acquainted with our Coasts, but by such Light as they borrow from our own Renegades”.

Not the least of Wentworth’s afflictions were the delays connected with any business transmitted for decision to England. Nicholadie was willing enough to eat humble pie, and to swear amendment in the matter of privateering, but though Wentworth wrote “letters upon letters” to the Admiralty he could extract no definite directions from their Lordships. Three months later, he complained to Coke that the pirates were still lying in prison at great expense, and God alone knew who eventually would bear that expense, since already he himself had felt obliged to provide ten pounds for clothing to “defend them against the injury of this extraordinary cold weather”, for he concludes, “it is a misery to see them lie here, cold and naked, in prison and not to know what to do with them”.¹

Wentworth did not confine himself to writing despatches. In no department was he afraid of incurring responsibility, least of all in naval matters, on which the very existence of Irish trade depended. His remedies were practical, founded on financial calculations which the most hide-bound official at Whitehall could not gainsay, and, even when he required considerable sums, he could prove to a nervous treasurer that it was expenditure which would spell eventual retrenchment as well as reform.

¹ *Letters*, vol. i. p. 135: Wentworth to Coke, Dublin, Oct. 23, 1633.

Example is always a potent force. Raylton, Wentworth's trusted agent, had disbursed £1400, on his master's account, to pay off the crew of the *Antelope* in London rather than await laggard payments from Ireland. This had saved the Crown a large sum, and Wentworth declared that he could not grudge it, or blame Raylton for having acted without reference to himself, though consequently he had "suffered on his own occasions" for his steward's liberality.¹

Wentworth was determined that the two guardships should be off the Irish coast by March instead of May, while, on the other hand, he was ready to dismiss the larger boat, the *Antelope*, earlier than was usual. After October, he remarked, shipping had mostly deserted seas grown too "tumultuous" for these big vessels which could not run for shelter.² Smaller craft would then suffice, and two months of the *Antelope's* keep would be saved. Further, the ships to be commissioned might be of lighter tonnage, which would cost the Irish establishment far less. And he insisted that they should not only be paid and repaired, but also victualled in Ireland, where food was cheaper.³ He could find seamen's rations, consisting of one pound of beef, one pound of bread, and a gallon of beer at sixpence *per diem*, whereas the same amount would run to eightpence in England. He did not add—as he might have done—that under his compelling eye there was a chance that the rations might be fit for human food. On this subject he had already taken steps to make his views known. Hearing that the sailors were being poisoned by rotten meat, he had promptly swooped down on a quartermaster and a cooper guilty of corrupt trafficking in "base provisions", and committed them to

¹ *Letters*, vol. i. p. 198: Wentworth to Coke, Dublin, Jan. 31, 1633.

² *Cal. S.P. Charles I., Ireland*, vol. ii. p. 14: Lord Deputy to Commissioners of Admiralty, July 6, 1633.

³ *Letters*, vol. i. p. 198.

prison. Hang they should, he vowed, if there was law for it, "or at least so pillory and slit their ears as others shall take little pleasure to serve the King so thereafter".¹

Wentworth would have disdained to inculcate his lessons of honesty merely at the expense of the "meaner sort". As Mr. Mahaffy has pointed out, he cherished no illusions regarding the incorruptibility of the English Admiralty officials.² The fashion in which accounts had been kept in Dublin called for—and obtained—immediate reformation; but the Admiralty's arithmetic must likewise have been faulty, since they had allowed themselves to be paid twice over without protest. For that reason, if for no other, he was determined to get the pay-sheets for men and materials and the victualling under his own direction, and also to establish an arsenal and repairing dock at Kinsale. His first request, or rather his summons, was refused. But he returned to the charge, and by 1635, having continuously bombarded their Lordships in epistles courteous or minatory, though one and all conceived in the mood imperative, he obtained his objects. Already, however, in 1634, the pirates had vanished from the scene, and commerce, having regained confidence, was reviving. The effect on the customs was immediate.³ The returns in the financial year of 1633–34 had been a little over £25,000. In 1635–36 they showed a rise to £39,000, and though a temporary set-back occurred in the following year, by 1637–38 they registered £57,000.

Before he reached Ireland, Wentworth had already sketched plans for furthering a commercial treaty with Spain. Irish products, which were mainly agricultural, were those of which that country stood in especial need. The silver fleet itself—he was credibly informed—would not be more welcome in Spanish ports than a butter ship from

¹ *Letters*, vol. i. p. 135; Wentworth to Coke, October 23, 1633.

² *Cal. S.P. Charles I., Ireland*, vol. ii. preface, p. xii. ³ *Idem*.

Ireland.¹ Indeed, if twenty vessels laden with corn and butter appeared they would be sold out a day after their arrival. Pipe-staves, hides, salted salmon were also greedily coveted both in Spain and Portugal; and with little trouble a large trade could be started in the Azores. There it would serve a double purpose, since, besides providing a fresh market for Irish goods, which were now transhipped thither from Spain, it would mean that the West Indian goods, sugar and spices, could return in Irish bottoms instead of being fetched, at far higher expense, from the Peninsula.

The commodity of which Ireland stood in greatest want to improve her natural products was salt.² Butter, fish, meat were in excess of food preservatives. Unless salt was imported, food-stuffs must rot in Ireland. Wentworth has been blamed for wishing to exploit the national need for England's profit. It must, however, be recognised, as Mr. Gardiner has pointed out, that if he wished to make Ireland dependent on England both for salt and cloth, it was not merely "that England might grow rich, but that Ireland might have peace". And, in the light of later events, he may be excused for believing that, short of economic dependence on England, peace would not be of long endurance in Ireland.

He put it concisely to Charles as a basic principle for the good government of Ireland, "that we must not only endeavour to enrich *them*, but make sure still to hold them dependent on the Crown, and not able to subsist without *us*".³

It is true that he pointed out that by vesting the salt monopoly in the Crown, and discouraging the Irish cloth manufacture, both the salt and customs revenues would

¹ *Letters*, vol. i. p. 95: Mr. Taylor to Wentworth, London, August 1, 1633.

² Gardiner, vol. viii. pp. 40-41.

³ *Letters*, vol. i. p. 93: Wentworth to King, July 16, 1633.

be improved, double duties being paid on Irish wool and on imported cloth. Since these were arguments which Charles could understand, Wentworth would have been wanting in common sense had he not used them. But we must remember that the revenue was a matter of as legitimate concern to Wentworth as to any modern Chancellor of the Exchequer. Nor was it to indulge royal extravagance, or even to make Charles independent of Parliament, that Wentworth strove to balance his budget. His aim and object was to achieve a well-ordered administration under which the nation would wax prosperous and contented.

In some ways Wentworth's views on trade were in advance of his generation.¹ Thus he had the courage to propose a duty on beer, not only to "repress the infinite excess of drunkenness" in Ireland, but also because

"it may be a step towards an Excise, which although it be heathen Greek in England, yet certainly would be more beneficial to the Crown and less felt by the subject than where the impositions are laid upon the foreign vent of commodities inward and outward as we see a plain demonstration".

To the popular mind the notion of excise was certainly anathema. It required the Cromwellian government to carry it in England, and then only at the point of the sword. Once established, however, the Restoration government showed its appreciation of the innovation by endorsing the Protector's policy.

Critics have talked as if Wentworth ruined instead of discouraged cloth manufacture in Ireland. As a matter of fact there was little to ruin. In asking for licences to export wool, he expressly states that there are no means in Ireland

¹ *Letters*, vol. i. p. 192: Wentworth to Portland, January 31, 1633. Quoted by Gardiner, vol. viii. p. 39.

for its manufacture. With the weaving carried on by the peasant women, who were in the habit of weaving and dyeing frieze for their own domestic use, he never interfered. This industry continued until the Rebellion put an end to that and most other Irish industries. He simply did not encourage an enterprise which could only have been successful if skilled artisans had been allowed to migrate from England to Ireland. In 1640 the Council in London, when approached on the subject, reported against such a scheme, largely because of the difficulties regarding apprenticeship, and it was not further pursued.

If he discouraged cloth manufactures, he was, however, determined, as he said to Charles, to leave the country happier than he found it, and consequently, from the beginning, he devoted much energy and money to the growth of hemp and flax and the creation of a linen industry. To achieve this, he pursued the plan he had followed with Blagnal and his workmen. He himself provided the funds to set up looms and to buy seed to the value of £1000, and was finally able to report that Ireland could undersell France and Holland by 20 per cent.¹

If Wentworth's maxim was "thorow", undoubtedly the moral of his administration was that honesty is the best policy; and it is interesting to note that to make this somewhat neglected virtue the corner-stone of the Commonwealth he neglected no smallest detail, though, at the same time, he outlined measures on a scale as generous as they were novel.

He succeeded to "empty coffers" and a heavy debt. Indeed, an income of £84,248:17:6 and charges of £92,679:15:0 constitutes a formidable problem for any financier.² In the circumstances, therefore, it is instructive that he commenced his reforms by insisting that all officials,

¹ Cunningham, *Growth of Industry and Commerce*, p. 369.

² *Letters*, vol. i. p. 190: Wentworth to Lord Treasurer, January 31, 1633/34.

civil and military, should be punctually paid, thus depriving them of all excuse for helping themselves to a livelihood out of the King's revenues. Even so, however, he granted them no unlimited confidence. His impression of the honesty of Treasury officials is disclosed by the stipulation that henceforward the accounts of the Court of Wards were to be kept in duplicate, "one for me, one for the Treasury". Further, he decreed that the Vice-Treasurer should no longer sit remote in his office, freed from all control.¹ The Clerk of the Pell was to share that dignitary's apartment, and contribute his assent and signature to every receipt and payment. Thus a series of checks at the fountain-head were contrived, while last, but not least, Wentworth announced that he intended weekly to review the Exchequer ledgers. Having thus cleared the ground, and provided, to the best of his ability, against leakages, the Deputy set himself to review the sources of revenue and their possible improvement. In this financial forecast plantations figured largely. He anticipated that well-managed plantations in Ormond and Connaught should bring in £5000 per annum. And if the twenty-fourth Article of the "Graces" (which confirmed the holdings of proprietors who had been in possession of their estates for sixty years) remained unratified, £3000 might be obtained from the findings of the so-called Commissioners of Concealments. Naturally, this was a thorny subject to handle. Therefore, to induce landowners to compound with the Commissioners, he would promise that not a penny should be required either by way of fine or increased rent until their estates were confirmed by Act of Parliament.

"This", said Wentworth, "is the only cord we have hitherto drawn them on by", and he felt that simultaneously an offer should be made to establish the titles of all who agreed to compound with the Commissioners. It was

¹ *Letters*, vol. i. pp. 191-3.

the "best salve" he could "apply to their sore" when they discovered that the twenty-fourth Article was not to be entered on the Statute Book.

Owing to the "Graces" the Court of Wards' revenue had fallen short by £4000 a year of the original estimate. Wentworth's proposals in this connection make us feel how wide is the gulf that separates us from the men of that generation, for he had no hesitation in suggesting that the Oath of Supremacy should be reimposed "as a good tacit means to bring them (the Roman Catholics) to conformity of Religion", since without it no Roman Catholic could sue his livery or take up his estate. It is true that the Roman Catholics had enjoyed seven years of immunity from this obligation instead of the three years for which they had petitioned, but this cannot exonerate Wentworth for a lapse from his own sense of statesmanship.

Wentworth's views on excise have already been mentioned, and it is interesting to find that he was equally inclined to tax tobacco. He was convinced that it was an article which might be made much more profitable to the revenue—as indeed it was when vested in him. In the privacy of evenings spent with his friends, when he unbent and became the pleasantest of companions, the great Proconsul was in the habit of smoking. He was therefore speaking as a connoisseur when he declared the Irish variety "to be very base in quality". Nevertheless, since tobacco was "so universally taken in Smoke, Snuff, and Chewing", it was such a valuable monopoly that it might, he believed, be possible to get it farmed out at £5000 a year. "The feat might be wrought", he concluded, "if the Earl of Middlesex's grant of the impost could be bought up", and this he thought could be compassed.

These grants were amongst the most crippling charges on the revenue. It was sound finance on Wentworth's

part to aim at abolishing these imposts and rents granted on the Customs to courtiers such as Middlesex, the Duchess of Buckingham, Endymion Porter, and Lord Carlisle. They formed a heavy drain on available funds, and actually necessitated contributions from the taxpayers to make up the deficit. The taxpayers themselves were so fearful that their contributions—"Benevolences" in fact—might become fixed taxes that they were ready to assist Wentworth to buy up these charges. A big sum might be required, equal perhaps to two or three parliamentary subsidies, to cancel an income of £10,000 per annum, but Wentworth believed that for this object it might be voted by Parliament. And, in Wentworth's opinion, Parliament was the key to the whole.

"All", he wrote, "save the Ordnance, the Pipestaves, and the Concealments should be led in by a Parliament, for if they should be undertaken before, I know not what humours it might stir."

Unlike his royal master, Wentworth never doubted that he could manage Parliament.

CHAPTER XIII

THE statesmen of the seventeenth century regarded Church and State as a unity that brooked no division. Public opinion went further, and toleration was generally regarded as a grievous sin. Strafford and Laud were not singular, therefore, in their insistence on uniformity, however questionable their methods may seem to a happier age; and, in fact, despite all the tirades launched against them they were infinitely less fanatical than "the godly" they sought to coerce.

Even Laud was careful to say that punishment of heresy and schism should not be "unto the blood". Whereas Cartwright, the Calvinist oracle of Elizabethan Puritanism, laid it down that "if the Law was justified in condemning a murderer to death, it followeth much more that he who taketh awaie the life of the soul should die."¹ The learned and estimable Ussher, an Irishman born and bred, denounced the majority of his countrymen as "superstitious idolaters" who were "perpetually outraging the honour of God".

Such being the mentality not of the "cobblers and other Bigots and zealous brethren" but of devout and scholarly Church dignitaries, it should not surprise us to find Wentworth expressing his conviction that Charles's desire to effect the "reducing" of Ireland to a conformity in religion with the Church of England was an ambition worthy of His Majesty's "pious and prudent heart". When Went-

¹ Scott Pearson, "Thomas Cartwright", *Elizabethan Puritanism*, p. 92.



By Sir Anthony van Dyke

WILLIAM LAUD, ARCHBISHOP OF CANTERBURY

(From the collection of Earl Fitzwilliam at Wentworth Woodhouse)

worth could effect the reformation of the administration at which he aimed, he too, he declared, would "be at them".¹ This was, however, a contingency so remote that it resembled the Greek kalends, and was in truth little more than a pious aspiration. Meanwhile he never allowed himself to be rushed or cajoled into any attempt to bring to pass this blessed consummation. His sense of justice and his statesmanship alike forbade the adoption of irritating penal measures. Indeed, he left Laud under no misapprehension as to the true state of the body ecclesiastic. To attempt to enforce conformity "before the decays of the material Churches be repaired, and an able clergy be provided, that so there might be both wherewith to receive, instruct and keep the People, were", he wrote, "as a man going to warfare, without ammunition or Arms".² It was "most certain that the to be wished Reformation must first work *from ourselves*". Consequently, with an energy equal to that which he showed in matters secular, Wentworth devoted himself to the "better ordering this poor Church, which hath thus long laid in the silent Dark".

In this truly Herculean labour, Wentworth had two allies, Laud in England and John Bramhall, Bishop of Derry, in Ireland. As a canon of York Minster, and his own chaplain in Dublin, Wentworth was brought into personal contact with Bramhall and had formed a high estimate of his capacities. Undoubtedly, Bramhall was an able administrator, recalling those medieval prelates who were the most efficient ministers of Plantagenet and early Tudor monarchs. His integrity would have passed the muster of the most exacting of our modern Civil Service standards. But he was rather fitted for secular than spiritual office. Unction he had none; while his retorts to recalcitrant divines were rather apt than courteous. In fact, the man

¹ *Letters*, vol. ii. p. 187: Wentworth to Laud, Jan. 31, 1633.

² *Idem*.

was a human battering-ram, and useful though a battering-ram may be it does not command affection. Next to Wentworth, Bramhall aroused more hatred than any member of the Irish executive, though much of that hatred resembled the feeling of the detected thief for the policeman who has brought him to book. The Ireland of that day certainly demanded militant qualities in the rulers of the Church. Even a saint like Bedell was moved to vehement denunciations. But that beauty of holiness which disarmed Bedell's bitterest opponents was certainly no attribute of John Bramhall. His greatest merits were his fine business qualities and his dogged honesty.

It did not take Bramhall long to make up his mind as to what was amiss with the Church of Ireland, and his letter to Laud a fortnight after his arrival in Dublin is perhaps the strongest indictment of the Church and its functionaries.

"For the fabrick", he wrote, "it is hard to say whether the churches be the more ruinous and sordid, or the people irreverent."¹

One church, as Charles, Laud, and Wentworth were already only too well aware, had been the Deputy's stable. Another had been converted into a nobleman's house, and the choir of a third served as a tennis court with—a truly Hibernian touch—the vicar acting as keeper. Thus the parochial churches. The case of Christ Church was perhaps more extraordinary, since it was the cathedral of the Irish capital, the church attended by the Deputy and the Council on Sundays. There,

"the vaults from one end of the Minster to the other are made into tippling rooms for beer, wine and tobacco, demised all to Popish recusants, and by them and others so much frequented in time of Divine Service, that though

¹ Bramhall's *Works*, I, lxxviii.: Bramhall to Laud, Dublin Castle, August 10, 1633.

there is no danger of blowing up the Assembly over their heads", says Bramhall with a touch of humour, "yet there is of poisoning them with the fumes".

As for the Communion table it was a convenient seat for maids and apprentices.

"The inferior sort of ministers are below all degrees of contempt, in respect of their poverty and ignorance, the boundless heaping together of benefices by commendams and dispensations in the superiors is but too apparent, yea, even by plain usurpation and indirect compositions made between the patrons (as well ecclesiastick as lay) and the incumbents; by which the least part, many times not above forty shillings, rarely £10, is reserved for him that should serve at the Altar, insomuch that it is affirmed that by all or some of these means one Bishop in the remoter parts of the Kingdom doth hold three and twenty benefices with Cure. Generally their residence is as little as their livings. Seldom any suitor petitions for less than three livings."¹

It was by such scandalous bargains that most of the good advowsons had been "passed away" in Lord Falkland's reign. So great was the chaos that Wentworth could not find any official to tell him what deaneries or other benefices remained in the gift of the Crown. Even after James's Act for safeguarding Church property, "divers are bold still to practice it by long leases or otherwise in hopes of secrecy and impunity". In the tax book for "first-fruits", three hundred livings, two or three bishoprics, and the whole diocese of Killfanora were omitted. The list of enormities chronicled by Bramhall culminates with the entry,

"the Earl of Cork holds the whole Bishopric of Lismore at the rent of forty shillings or five marks a year".²

The only balm Bramhall could administer to himself

¹ Bramhall's *Works*, lxxx.

² *Idem*, lxxxi.

and Laud was one peculiar, it is to be hoped, to that distant epoch.

"It is some comfort to see the Romish ecclesiastics cannot laugh at us, who come behind none in point of disunion and scandal."¹

As Wentworth said, "the best entrance to the Cure will be to discover the State of the Patient". The wounds and sores were too obvious to require much probing, and in a few months Wentworth was able to propound his remedies. It did not take him so long to reform the outward and visible signs of disorder in his immediate neighbourhood. The church which had harboured Lord Falkland's horses was promptly restored to its original state. A fortnight after his disembarkation, Wentworth had the pew in his chapel pulled down, and in its stead erected the altar which had been turned out of doors.

Architectural restorations were, however, merely the signs of the "purgation" to be effected. In Bramhall's letter it is recorded that Wentworth instantly laid it down that no petitions from the clergy were to be admitted without "diligent enquiry". It speaks volumes for the preceding system, or want of system, that this was "thought a strange course here".

The real crux of the problem was, how livings destroyed by long leases at under-value, or other subterfuges, could be restored to their original use without defrauding a purchaser who might have acquired what appeared to be legitimate property. For very often such leases were inherited or sold in good faith.

We might expect Wentworth to have swept away the legal quibbles surrounding this knotty problem with a ruthless hand, and clear them away he certainly did, yet with a regard for common-sense justice which a more emancipated generation should appreciate.

¹ Bramhall's *Works*, I, lxxxii.

Where the man in possession had "passed" the lease to himself, he was forced to surrender. For, said Wentworth, "this we judge fraudulent and a disherison of the Church, but then the difficulty encounters us, that those men dead, these persons which now possess the Land come in by mean conveyance" [*i.e.* as third parties] "and so no way acquainted with the Fraud, or the Bishop to be relieved in this case against them. This is the stone of offence."¹

The stone of offence was, however, circumvented by a carefully adjusted scheme of compensation for disturbance. A strict valuation of the lands was to precede all action. In any case the tenant was to surrender his lease. If the lands had proved as good or better than his price he was, however, to receive in exchange a new twenty-one years' lease for which he was to pay rent calculated at 60 per cent of its value, the rent to be secured to the Church. If the returns fell below its value he was to continue on the original conditions until they realised that figure. As Wentworth said, "my sentence was not to touch the purchaser criminally in the least kind, neither that he should be the loser". How carefully the interests of the innocent third party were safeguarded is shown, as Dr O'Grady has pointed out, in a case of one of the Earl of Cork's purchases.² Lord Cork had bought as a third party a fifty-five years' lease of Church lands in the dioceses of Cork, Cloyne, and Ross.

"Legally", says Dr. O'Grady, "it was waste paper, but Strafford remitted the case to arbitration and it was decided that Cork should pay a fine of £150 and be allowed to retain the lease for the life of the existing Bishop."

Since we are always told that Wentworth's prosecution of the "Great Earl" was inspired by a violent personal animus, this particular case deserves to be recorded.

¹ *Letters*, vol. i. p. 171: Wentworth to Laud, December 1633.

² O'Grady, vol. i. pp. 325-6, 525.

The case which had occasioned Wentworth's explanation to Laud of his system for dealing with "undervalued leases" was undoubtedly a typical instance of wholesale spoliation. It appears that a former Bishop of Killalla had alienated the endowments of his see for sixty years, reserving merely a hundredth part of the yearly value to his successors. The actual Bishop's wails and appeals for restitution had resulted in the appointment of a Royal Commission to investigate the matter. And this inquiry enabled Wentworth to lay down guiding principles for the treatment of similar cases. The Bishop was not to be the sole beneficiary by their rules. On the contrary, Wentworth was determined that three-fifths of the rent should be secured to the Church without any possibility of interference from the occupant of the see, else, as he bitterly remarked,

"if we should not also bind the Hand of the Bishop . . . we should but wash a Blackmoor, lose all our labour, and leave the Church through the Rapacity of Laicks and Covetousness of the Clergy as poor and naked to Posterity, as former Times have left it to us".¹

Wentworth was undoubtedly wise to take precautions against the overseers of the Church, for this very Bishop was caught out in as nefarious a trick as his predecessor. Sir Daniel O'Brien, who was a lessee of lands valued at £500, took fright on hearing of Wentworth's "rules", and "did so juggle with the Bishop underhand as that he compounded privately to accept £26 for all the Interest of the Church". He had, however, counted without the new Deputy.

"*Si hæc fiunt in viridi, in arido quid fiet?*" says Wentworth, who continues, "I got notice of it, sent to the Bishop, told him roundly he had betrayed the Bishoprick; that he deserved to have his Rochet (setting the dignity of his

¹ *Letters*, vol. i. p. 171: Wentworth to Laud, Dec. 1633.

calling aside) pulled over his Ears, and to be turned to a stipend of four nobles a year, and so warmed his old sides, as I made him break the agreement, crave Pardon, and promise to follow the Cause with all diligence."

This was "thorough" with a vengeance, and received high praise from Laud, who wrote, "you did very nobly to harrow him as you did".¹ Nor, indeed, did the Archbishop end his commendations there. He told Wentworth that he had been "in a bodily fear" that Wentworth would not be able to leap over "the stone of offence", but he recognised that he had "done it, and very cleanly", and that His Majesty was "marvellously pleased", commanded thanks to Wentworth, and bid him "go on cheerfully".

The Bishop of Killalla was by no means the only prelate whose rochet Wentworth would fain have pulled over his head. Boyle, the Bishop of Cork, who owed his preferment to his great cousin, was another delinquent.² In later years Lord Cork bitterly rued his misplaced kindness to this Bishop. "My perfidious, faythles, unthankful kinsman" he termed this prelate, who eventually, in Wentworth's phrase, "played booty" and gave his rich relation away. At this time, however, he was on good terms with Lord Cork, who avowed that he had "raised him from being a poor schoolmaster at Barnett, where he had but a stipend of £20 sterling per annum". Cork and Cloyne were twin sees, but one Sir Thomas FitzEdmund had "swallowed up the whole diocese", or, in other words, acquired a net £800 per annum, buying the Bishop's consent with a £500 bribe³ "to stop his mouth upon his entrance". This, said Wentworth with grim conciseness, "is the next piece I purpose to fall upon".

Over another ecclesiastical scandal which called for reform, Charles and Laud were entirely at one with Went-

¹ Laud's *Works*, vii. pp. 57, 58.

² *Lismore Papers*, vol. iv. p. 228, March 1, 1635/37.

³ Fitzwilliam MSS.: Wentworth to Laud, April 12, 1633/34.

worth. The high sexual morality which now seems to us part of the warp and woof of Irish character was a virtue of curiously late growth in Ireland. Wentworth was horrified to discover that it was a common business for a man to repudiate his wife and children, "abandon the former, and betake himself to a new task".¹ Much of this laxity he imputed to the habit of allowing marriages to be celebrated, probably with insufficient or drunken witnesses, in private houses, late at night, and "which is odd", he remarks, "after supper". He consequently urged that the canonical hours observed in England for the celebration of holy matrimony should be made obligatory in Ireland. Indeed, he further advocated the English Canons, in their entirety, being imposed on the Irish Church, which as yet was governed by no such authoritative rules. And to stiffen the whole body ecclesiastic, he begged that a Court of High Commission might—as soon as Parliament was disposed of—be installed in Dublin. The list of offences they would be called on to "punish" and "restrain" was formidable. In the first category were "abominable Polygamies, incests and adulteries". In the second, "the extream extortions of Officials, Registers and such like"—no unneeded restraint when we remember that Bedell could not prevent his own archdeacon from fleecing the unhappy Irishry. As in the secular state Wentworth had besought the King for power to restrain the oppressions of great ones, so he was determined that the state ecclesiastic should be ruled by equitable principles.

There may well have been times when impropriations must have seemed not stones but mountains of offence to Wentworth. Nevertheless, eventually, owing to his and Bramhall's labours, Jeremy Taylor declared that the Church was left twice as well endowed as when Wentworth took over the Government. The desire to exchange a doubtful

¹ *Letters*, vol. i. p. 188: Wentworth to Laud, Dec. 31, 1633.

for a legal title doubtless induced many landowners to embrace Wentworth's offers. He was, moreover, careful not to draw his schedule of compensation on too niggardly a scale.

Arbitration effected a great many satisfactory arrangements to both parties. Ormonde, always large-minded and generous, submitted all his ecclesiastical property to arbitration. Bramhall notes down on his list of advowsons reclaimed for the Church that the majority were "compounded". In his own diocese of Down, he says that by pressing some of the owners "with points of honour, and others of conscience, they all consented to surrender their estates to the Church and accept leases at valuable rents".¹ The real test as to the equity of the many cases which came up for judgement before Wentworth is that not one of these figures amongst the charges brought up against him at his trial; and how gladly any accusation, however trivial, was welcomed, the swollen charge-sheets show. Yet for all their intrinsic equity, and Bramhall's shrewdness and business ability, these restitutions could never have been effected if Wentworth's handling of Lord Cork and other great personages had not given warning that the most powerful in the land were no longer to obstruct justice. Wentworth, said Ussher, never canvassed the members of the Council to influence their decisions. He was occasionally outvoted. But when he sat in Castle Chamber the poor humble folk knew that their grievances would have a fair hearing, and, if need be, a zealous protector.

When Knowler in 1739 published the *Strafford Letters* he hesitated to show up the "Great Earl" in his true light. A hundred years represent three generations, and at that epoch authors were more nervous of hurting grandchildren's sensitive feelings than they are nowadays. He therefore kept silence, and the most damning evidence of Cork's

¹ O'Grady, vol. i. pp. 530, 533, quoted from *Church of Ireland Papers*, xii. 71.

methods has lain buried until now. Gardiner shrewdly remarked that unless he was "much maligned, he used his opportunities unscrupulously".¹

For want of this correspondence, now first published, one historian after another has concluded that Wentworth's dealings with Cork were inspired by a violent personal animus. This, however, does not seem to have been the case. Wentworth could only have been flattered by the matrimonial propositions Cork made to him, and had he then entertained the opinion of the Earl forced on him by closer acquaintance, he would not have suggested that his niece should marry Lord Dungarvan—for Wentworth was evidently much attached to the family of his first wife. It is true that hardly had he made the suggestion, eagerly embraced by both sides, than misgivings assailed him. He had scarcely arrived in Dublin before he begs leave to advise Lord Clifford,

"how well soever you like the match, do not seem to be fond of it, for in soe doing you shall in my opinion overvalue them and undervalue yourself more than there is cause. Take it then in a noble manner as a match; albeit you like, yet show you understand very well your daughter deserves as good a one, and in all things which pass amongst you preserve the honour and integrity of the House of Cumberland, which, in my judgment, you shall fail of, if instead of receiving him with all civility and courtesy, you fall to court and seek him with too much industry and affectation. And so I leave this business to God's good blessing, trusting it shall in the conclusion be honourable and contentful to you all, both Parents and children".²

Lord Cork was evidently as pleased to secure this particular wife for his eldest son and heir as was Clifford to

¹ Gardiner, vol. viii. p. 33.

² Fitzwilliam MSS.: Wentworth to Lord Clifford, Dublin, September 28, 1633.

obtain a good dowry for his daughter. To do Lord Cork justice he was no less fond of giving than of getting, and it was with evident satisfaction that he noted the despatch of his first token—the first of many gifts—to Mistress Elizabeth Clifford. “My picture in a Tablet of gold sett with faire diamonds and writch pendant pearls (that was my dear deceased daughter Digbie’s and now given me by her husband for this purpose)”¹—the mingled frugality and generosity of the token being characteristic of the Earl.

Both Cork and Clifford were unanimous in referring the momentous question of marriage settlements to Wentworth; Lord Clifford, with good reason, feeling he could rely on his brother-in-law’s perspicacity and sound judgement. Cork was equally content—as he subsequently avowed—to do it as a means of ingratiating himself with the most powerful Deputy who had yet set foot on Irish soil.

Wentworth was far too wide awake not to penetrate the reasons for the Earl’s readiness, despite some bargaining, to comply with any demands he might put forward to protect his niece’s position, and consequently grew more and more uneasy as time went by. In December he wrote to inform Lord Clifford that he had arranged a better marriage settlement than was expected, but felt he should tell him some of the disadvantages.² The jointure was partly settled on the great house of Lismore, which might return to the see, though Cork had probably made it safe.

“Yet,” says Wentworth, “it is still a direct Rapine upon the patrimony of the Church, a Coal taken from the Altar, and to build upon so rotten a foundation, to bring such a fire into my house, should never, and I trust none of mine ever shall.”

¹ *Lismore Papers*, vol. ii. p. 221, December 11, 1633.

² Fitzwilliam MSS.: Wentworth to Lord Clifford, Dublin, December 7, 1633.

Youghal College was also to be part of the jointure, a property of much the same nature, into which he was instructed to inquire. "I had rather his than my conscience should answer either the getting or the keeping of it."

Wentworth had now been five months in Ireland, and the knowledge he had acquired made him equally dissatisfied with Lord Cork's doing in the matter of secular affairs. It outraged all Wentworth's feelings of honour to discover that the ex-Lord Justice in the assessment of contributions towards the Army had so manœvered as to exempt his own towns and rectories, "while all the rest of the Kingdom run up in payments to His Majesty". Thereby, the Sovereign had lost £2500, and, of course, other towns and rectories had to make up the deficit. Meanwhile he, Wentworth, must "look straightforward" and do his duty, but he was haunted by the fear that if his course led to conflicts with her father-in-law, the Boyles might value "my noble Mistresse lesse for my sake". Clifford was warned, but so also was Cork. Wentworth was even more explicit on the subject to Laud, remarking that the marriage between Cork's son and Clifford's daughter made it very unpleasant for him to quarrel with Cork.

"But neither alliance nor any other thing or reason should be ever able to separate me from the Service of God and my Master, or persuade me to quench the flame in another man's house by taking the fire of that guilt into my own Bowells; which my conscience cries upon me, I doe, if I silently pass over this prophanation, and so become *particeps criminis* with him."¹

During the discussions on the marriage, Wentworth, in the presence of witnesses, had taken care to make his position clear. He had laid it down as an axiom of his future conduct:

¹ Fitzwilliam MSS.: Wentworth to Laud, December 2, 1633.

“that I was not for this, or any other respect to be declined from the comely and upright wayes of honour and justice, that to expect other from me was the greatest injury that could be done me.”¹

Later, he reiterated his resolution:

“that as in our own privates, he [Lord Cork] could not promise himself too much, soe when I was in my public capacity as I stood responsible for the faithful discharging the trusts reposed in me by His Majesty towards the Public, he could not promise himself too little, there being nothing more sure than therein I should look upon him with no other eye than the meanest Stranger; that my Master’s service stood in Sovereign degree with me, and all private interests to be ever held in subordination to that.”

If Lord Cork thought that these declarations were the usual official eye-wash, customary to all ages, he was rapidly disillusioned. About the same time he wrote the above, Cork came to Wentworth with the request that a case pending between him and one of the many poor parsons—a certain Berisford—whose income he had absorbed might be heard privately by the Lord Deputy. The Earl had not been accustomed, he said, to be brought publicly before the Board, and he was ready to agree to whatever Wentworth thought fit. To which Wentworth replied that if the other party to the case consented he would agree. On consideration, however, that

“lapping the matter thus up in silence, I lost a great part of my end which was by an open example to lead on and encourage the poorer Clergy to exhibit their just complaints against Persons, how great soever, I directed Dr. Bramhall to steele the good man and cause him openly at Bord, upon his knees, to desire his cause might be there heard, wherein he could not be too saucy or too importunate, which the Doctor did. Mr Berisford, with much adoe,

¹ Fitzwilliam MSS.: Wentworth to Laud, Dublin, December 1633.

was brought to press for a public hearing wherein I acted my part so well, bending my brows, asking whether he durst not trust me in private as well as in public, or what cause of suspicion I had given him in that kind, that the poore man fainted, and said with all his hart he would content himself with my private hearing. My reply was hot and sharp, for I had good cause, having my judgment mistrusted, that however, whether he would or no, nor should he have grounds to clamour against me, for anything done in secret. And so appointed the next day for that cause. At which tyme I gave an equall hearing to both parties, albeit I obteyned it with some difficulty. My Lord of Corke and his Counsil still casting in personal matters to divert me, till I plainly and publicly told his Lordship the plaintiff must not be interrupted in his evidence. The business concerned the Church which was dearer and carried more prerogative with me than any man's person whatsoever. That for my owne part I held it one of the crying Sins of this nation that men had laid sacrilegious hands upon the Patrimony of the Church, that their setting up on these sees would draw down God's judgement upon the whole land, making themselves thus guilty not only of shedding the blood, but even the soules of men by taking from the Minister means of livelihood, and consequently from the people the ordinary means of Salvation. That I was purposed to preserve myself from bearing any part in such an infamous sacrilege. And therefore was resolved to hunt these persons in every corner as the most pestilent vermine of the whole Kingdom. And that I wondered any who could pretend to the growth of Popery could think there were any better expedient under God and His Majesty by which to lessen and weaken them, then by first providing for the settling a Religious, learned and able ministry; which was impossible unless those who were to administer were likewise inabled to live by the Altar. Soe we got to an end of the Cause, and restored Mr Berisford to his vicarage, adjudged Joy, my Lord of Corke's tenant, who tooke the profits, to answer him the mean rates of the same ever since he came to be incumbent (which as I take it is now

six years) and *honoris causa* mentioned it in our Order, that this violence being the act of Joy the Tenant, without my Lord of Corke's privity, that this Act was made by my Lordship's owne offer and at his own intreaty. Thus have I fixt the first link of that Chaine, which I assure myself will draw back after it an hundred livings with cure of Souls into the bosom of the Church; besides some thousands of acres of land for their Glebes. I have some thirty in view already. And some ten days since I presented to three other vicarages in the Earl of Corke his possession, which are yet more manifest than these two already recovered. They will be brought him within these few days as a second service, and there remains Cates enough to furnish out a third Course and a deserte besides. And will your Grace not then confess his Lordship keeps a full diet? Therefore a little now and then to rake him will be much for his health. Gallen himself could not get on in a better method than to draw from him little by little the peccant humour. I perswade his Lordship to take this Physick, otherwise, believe me, all the Lectures (and two of these a week he hears all this while devoutly) and Perkins' "Cases of Conscience", to boote, would never have been able to inforce it upon him."

Another matter undoubtedly furnished material for Cork's unsavoury "deserte and cates". By an old Act, if a patron neglected to appoint to an advowson, that living reverted to the Crown. Wentworth revived the statute, with the result that five advowsons were lost to the "Great Earl".

In comparison with the Church property he had acquired, five advowsons were, however, an almost negligible loss to Cork. In that same busy month of December, when Wentworth had his hands full reviewing the political position, he sent a schedule of Cork's gains, which must have caused some surprise even to Laud, acquainted as he already was with the wholesale looting of the sister Church.

Though a somewhat lengthy document, as an index to,

and explanation of, Wentworth's policy with land-grabbers it deserves to be cited in full.

The "inventory of what Lord Cork has got out of the Bishopric of Lismore.

"The Bishop's Palace and the greatest part of his possessions.

"The Dean's house and domains of deanery.

"Part of Treasurership.

"Archdeaconry.

"Vicarage of Tallow, lands belonging the Vicar's Choral = 4/5ths. Fabrick lands and tythes of Cathedral Church revenue.

"Lazars' house or Hospital.

"The estate claimed by Corke.

"Manor of Lismore = £500 per annum, pretends to be in fee farm.

"Manor of Ardmore, Ballinsmay and Knoballee by long lease, was given by Queen Elizabeth to Sir Walter Raleigh, who even brought Bishop Weatheridd over to doe this godly act and got him rewarded with Bishopric of Exeter.

"Manor of Killkee, part of the deanery lands, Vicar's Choral lease to Sir Walter Raleigh by Melerus Archbishop of Cashell, whose memory ought to be in abomination to all posterity for his sacrilege and Rapine upon the Patrimony of the Church.

"Passed by Sir Walter Raleigh to Earl other great seale confirmations. Judgement on Sir Walter Raleigh that he was inforced to stoop to £1500, which was all the Earl paid him for all Church lands and others worth at least £1000 per annum.

"By this tyme you see a wofull face of a Church, God wot, reduced from £1000 to £50 revenue by year; the Deanery and dignitaries impoverished, the fabrick of the Church ruined, the poor Vicar's Choral beggared, the miserable Lepers turned naked and empty from those reliefs provided by the piety of former times, and that, which might have been [preserved] a light of Religion and

Charity, clouded under a palpable darkness of impiety and rapine.¹

"College of Youghall (Ireland)—one Warden, eight fellows, eight choristers indowed, besides other lands, with twelve intire Rectories, and Kingsbrok, £84 per annum. The several leases whereof they were bound to discharge the whole possession of the College, £800 per annum.

"Warden leased college for sixty years (fifteen yet to run). Corke got lease, gains sumptuously from His Majesty without consideration or warrant the Patronage of ye whole college. Next vacancy Corke appoints his cousin Boyle, never fills up (as he promised) fellowships, gets College Seale, Charters, etc. Having thus hitt the bird he shott at, performes no part of all this. Sir W. Parsons receives this in trust for the Earl (twenty years ago), reserving yearly rent of £13 : 6 : 8. In 1627 the Warden had scruples, explained the situation to Fellows, and, under threat of prosecution, Corke agrees to pay £20 a year to each Fellow, increase from twenty marks to near £100 per annum."

Thus the

"whole college is bedded and sleeps her last under the safeguard of three Boyles, a Patron, a Warden and a Fellow, the Earl, the Bishop of Corke, Bishop of Waterford.

"Chapter of Waterford should have confirmed grants.

"Corke so alarmed at being brought up at Council Board, rather than be baited again, his Lordship very piously yielded up two vicarages, sayd if they belong to the Church, God forbid he should hold them any longer. Faith, the Nobleman would do right if he were not abused by his officers."

The Deputy sums up the whole indictment with the remark that not only the Church but the King had been defrauded, since he lost his first-fruits thereby.

Though Wentworth was a brave man, he told Laud that

¹ Fitzwilliam MSS.: Wentworth to Laud, Dublin, December.

he felt he could only cope with such a far-flung scheme of spoliation at the direct command of Charles himself. What he had done had been *liberavi animam meam*.

To do Charles justice, independently of the hopes held out to him of recovering a good sum in the shape of first-fruits, he was eager to ensure to the Church of Ireland reputable clergy, endowed with weather-proof churches and rectories. With the reservation of a rent to the Crown, he made over to the Church the impropriations, amounting to £1120 a year, which remained in the gift of the Crown, and agreed that they should be tied up by a Trust protecting them from future alienations.¹ The Queen did not prove herself so accommodating as the Sovereign. A part of the Consort's income had been secured on the tithes, and her treasurer, Sir Richard Wynne, was very much on the alert when property was in the melting-pot. "A prowling fellow", the exasperated Laud called him.² If once any impropriations got into his hands, and those of his aiders and abettors, the Archbishop feared they might be handed over to "priests and friars to the infinite hurt of the Church". However, acting on Wentworth's injunction "to lend an eye and a word if need be in prevention of it, yet the more privately the better", Laud for once contrived to secure the King's assistance against a scheme intended to benefit his idolised wife.³

Though Wentworth was the sworn enemy of pluralities, he did not, however, wish to press these limitations too far. When Laud advised that no clergyman should be allowed to hold more than two livings—though Wentworth characterised this stipulation as equally "worldly wise and most full of Christian charity"—he nevertheless advocated delay,

¹ O'Grady, vol. i. pp. 536-7.

² Laud's *Works*, vol. vii. p. 106.

³ Fitzwilliam MSS.: Wentworth to Laud, December 9, 1634.

"till other things incident be a little better disposed, my meaning is till the Rights of the Pastors be a little more universally settled, and till there be a means found to bring the Common People to our Church. Till these two be done I see a double objection against it which I am not able to answer. The Livings are so mean as half a dozen of some of them are hardly able to buy a Minister his Clothes; the Conformants so few, that in these six you shall not find six within those Parishes that come to Church. And in a case both ways of this extremity, why should they here be as strictly bound up under that rule as they are in England, where the condition of the Clergy (God be praised) is far otherwise."¹

Again, although he decreed that clerical leases should only run for twenty-one years, a clear moiety being reserved for the incumbent, he made an exception in favour of leases granted on episcopal lands in Ulster.² In that province, labour, whether English or Irish, was so much in demand that he insisted that for five years subsequent to the Act, the Bishops should have the right to grant sixty years' leases, both to attract labour and, as Bramhall commented, "to set the tenants' minds at rest".

A large part of James I.'s endowment for schools had vanished by 1633, but in 1634 Wentworth, who was bent on encouraging education, appointed a Commission to hunt out the "temporalities", and also to inquire into such schools as were in being.³ A Statute of Henry VIII. making education in school or workshop obligatory was resuscitated, and, fortified by instructions from Charles I., produced excellent results; while the creation of the five Royal Schools of Ulster is also due to that monarch. Unlike Trinity College, where an oath, repudiating the spiritual as well as the temporal supremacy of the Pope, had now become obligatory for graduates, recusants were

¹ Fitzwilliam MSS.: Wentworth to Laud, April 12, 1633/34.

² O'Grady, vol. i. p. 521.

³ *Idem*, vol. i. p. 531.

welcomed at these schools where, indeed, even some of the teachers were Roman Catholics—a cause of complaint against Strafford by the Puritans at his trial.

All these measures served to restore brightness and light to the Church that had so long “lain silent in the dark night”. But probably the most effective piece of legislation was the Act passed in Wentworth’s Parliament which practically reversed the Statute of Mortmain.¹ Thereby the return of impropriations, tithes, and small glebes, or the bestowal of fresh donations to the Church, was legalised. Henceforth an act of restitution could no longer fill the pockets of the “informer”, the Attorney-General, the Escheator-General, and the donors’ heirs as it had hitherto done.

Thus, in the course of two years, Wentworth made it possible for the Church to exist as a working machine. The next step was to ensure that the men who worked the machine should be worthy of their trust. Saints such as Bedell are never numerous. No bishop or priest of the reformed Church in Ireland of that period can be compared to the Bishop of Kilmore. But the type of clergy imported by Wentworth and Laud were generally honourable and upright men, and frequently good scholars, and if they were sometimes intolerant of dissent, they were mild in comparison to the Scottish nonconformists. When the storm broke, they showed themselves staunch to their colours; and though loyalty with some took too militant a cast to suit our ideals, there were other holy and humble men of heart who with wife and child sealed their faith with their blood.

¹ O’Grady, vol. i. pp. 535-6.

CHAPTER XIV

FROM the first, Wentworth was bent on calling a Parliament in Dublin, not only to get the many useful measures he coveted on the Irish Statute Book, but to obtain the subsidies so urgently needed. He was prepared to obtain the Army's pay at any cost; yet, as he said, "to pass to the extraordinary before there be, at least, an attempt first to effect it with ease, were to love difficulties, rather voluntarily to seek them, than unwillingly to meet them".¹ The prospect was the more promising since Poyning's Act vetoed any legislation not drafted and forwarded by the Irish Deputy and Council for assent to England²—the same position, as Dr. O'Grady points out, which the British Government retains merely for finance. Charles had, however, to be converted, and to this end Wentworth marshalled all his facts and figures in a careful paper.

The Deputy's arrangements for voluntary assessments, successful as they were, had merely tided him over the first months of the viceroyalty. The Irish revenue, unassisted by Parliament or benevolences, fell short yearly by £20,000 of the expenditure, and the outstanding debt amounted to £80,000; and £80,000 appeared a monstrous incubus to any seventeenth-century Chancellor of the Exchequer. Wentworth's scheme for meeting the past debt and the future revenue was to obtain three subsidies of £30,000, plus the continuation during four years of the voluntary annual contribution of £20,000.

¹ *Letters*, vol. i. p. 183: Wentworth to King, April 12, 1634.

² O'Grady, vol. i. p. 106.

Nevertheless £170,000, even distributed over four years, was a huge sum to demand of a country so backward as Ireland, and of this Wentworth was well aware.¹ But he had vision and courage, and realised that the only means to extricate the country from its Slough of Despond was to obtain sufficient funds to pay the services, and to make the King's writ honoured in deed as in word. These were, however, not arguments likely to appeal to the men who would pull the wires in the coming Parliament. Nor would they be affected by the consideration that the debt had been contracted "for a Public good, whereof the benefit hitherto had been entirely theirs".² The argument which alone would untie their purse-strings "was the frightful apprehension which at this Time makes their Hearts beat, lest the Quarterly payments towards the Army, continued now almost ten years, might in fine turn to an hereditary charge on their Lands, and incline them to give any reasonable thing in present to secure themselves of that fear for the future, and therefore according to the wholesome counsel of the Physician: '*Dum dolet accipe*'." In fact, Wentworth thought that if the quarterly contributions were dropped they might be brought to give three subsidies in three instead of four years, and £20,000 in addition to buy up the grants and rents charged in the revenue.

Since he had no intention of allowing all the "Graces" to be passed into law, and realised how terrible a disappointment this would prove, Wentworth was proportionately anxious to keep the House in good temper. He therefore proposed that there should be two sessions, one for summer, the other for winter. The first was to be devoted to supply. In the second, as many of the "Graces" "as in Honour and wisdom should be judged equal, when the putting aside of the rest might be of no ill consequence to other your Royal Purposes" should be enacted.

¹ O'Grady, vol. i. p. 111.

² *Letters*, vol. i. pp. 182-4.

Translated into plain English this meant that the money must first be voted, and then, if Parliament proved recalcitrant, supply would not suffer. Necessary though it may be, political diplomacy is seldom a pretty spectacle. The same diplomacy was responsible for the suggestion that the announcement of the double sessions and their objects should be made at the opening of Parliament. "To ascertain the payments of the Army and to strike off the debts of the Crown" might be balanced against the cheerful prospect of passing "all such profitable and wholesome Laws, as a moderate and good people may expect from a wise and gracious King". That these "profitable laws" would not include the sixty years' limitation of property was, of course, the last disclosure Wentworth contemplated. Indeed, throughout, he implored Charles to keep his plan of campaign secret from all but the four or five personages who formed the Cabinet Committee on Irish affairs.¹

Nor can he be blamed for this precaution, since both in London and Dublin he was beset by intriguers, bent solely on their own ends. Even judged by modern standards—undoubtedly an unjust test—Wentworth's aims were far removed from those of this crowd of self-seekers. Indeed, his aims can be described as idealistic, since they embraced the welfare of the people no less than that of the Sovereign. Their twin prosperity was the theme of all his discourses, the aim of all his measures, helped forward by the burning indignation aroused in him by any tale of wrong or oppression to the poor. In this very report,² he refers to "the pressures of the great men" under which "the meaner sort of subjects here" live, and to the exactions of officials, who wrung larger fees than they were entitled to do from the helpless folk, as grievances which called for immediate redress. He proposed to draw up tables of fees for the

¹ Archbishop Laud, Portland, Coke, Windebank, and Arundel.

² *Letters*, vol. i. p. 186: Wentworth to the King, April 12, 1634.

various courts, while, as he concisely put it, he hoped that "examples of two or three offenders would help".

"So us as they (the meaner sort) shall find your Majesty's goodness and justice watching and caring for their protection and Ease both in private and publick respects."

Marginal notes on State documents are often instructive. Charles's "apostille" on this paragraph is eminently characteristic. So long as these reforms were carried out by his authority, and not by Parliament, he was graciously pleased, he informed his Deputy, to accord them his sanction.

In winding up his report, Wentworth forecasts the policy which eventually he followed with success.

"I shall endeavour", he said, "the Lower House may be so composed as that neither the Recusants, nor yet the Protestants shall appear considerably more one than the other, holding them as much as may be upon an equal balance; for they will prove thus easier to govern than if either Party were absolute. Then would I, in private discourse, shew the Recusants, that the contribution ending in December next, if your Majesty's Army were not supplied some other way before, the 12d. a Sunday must of necessity be exacted upon them; and shew the Protestants that your Majesty must not let go the £20,000 contribution, nor yet discontent the other in matters of Religion, till the Army were some way else certainly provided for; and convince them both, that the present quarterly Payments are not so burdensome, as they pretend to be; and that by the 'Graces' they have had already more benefit than their money came to. Thus poisoning one by the other, which single might perchance prove more unhappy to deal with."¹

The two elements essential to the success of Wentworth's parliamentary scheme were speed and secrecy. Not daring to entrust his report, letters, and plans to the

¹ *Letters*, vol. i. pp. 185-6.

ordinary courier, he therefore determined to send them with some silver ingots, the "first-fruits" of a new mine, to the King by his brother Sir George Wentworth, who could confirm and amplify his statements by word of mouth. Undoubtedly he could not have chosen a more devoted or efficient messenger. [The work George Wentworth got through in an age when motors and telephones were marvels yet undreamt of, brings home to the reader of his journal that "hustlers" are not solely the product of our generation.] And when Lord Arundel remarked that George resembled his distinguished brother "not only in outward shape, but in the inward parts, for I do observe not only a good judgement but great secrecy and advisedness in all his ways . . . so rare in the young men of these Times", he paid the young man a well-deserved compliment.¹

"Earnest in your Lordship's commands", as George accurately described himself, he rushed from Lambeth, where the Archbishop invited him to dinner, and ceremoniously drank the Lord Deputy's health, to the Lord Treasurer at Roehampton. Thence he coursed back to the siren of the day, Lady Carlisle, at her home in the Strand; and from her to Lord Cottington, who, for once, seemed "pensive" as a result of his wife's death, though somewhat cheered by Wentworth's sympathetic epistles, and finally posted off to the King at Newmarket. There, ministers and courtiers appear to have played shuttlecock with the poor envoy. After a bad fall out hunting, the King was invisible for twenty-four hours, but at last George Wentworth found himself in the royal presence, was beckoned forward, and, after "three several obeyances", on his bended knee presented the despatches to Wentworth's "Great Master".² His Majesty retreated to the

¹ *Letters*, vol. i. p. 232: Earl Marshal to Wentworth, April 16, 1634.

² *Idem*, vol. i. p. 219: George Wentworth to Wentworth.

window, and there "in my sight read every word of the letter", and cheered George's faithful heart by remarking that he was "happy in Wentworth's service", and that he would not keep the bearer long waiting for an answer.

Though George Wentworth must have thought his mission accomplished, nevertheless it was a whole month before the royal assent to a Parliament was officially given. Meanwhile, between getting the silver ingots cast into bars and stamped, and running round to the influential members of the Government, he continued to live laborious days. Nor were his commissions limited to affairs of State. It is amusing to find that the Deputy could be as careful in his directions for a suit of clothes as when expounding his parliamentary policy.

"I pray you", he wrote, "to take Rawlin to you, and make choyce of a pure good Cloth for a suit for me, and let him line ye Cloth with Plush and make two doubtletts and two hose of ye same Clothe, for I make accompt that one Cloke will last as long as two suits. But let there not be any lace or trimming upon them at all, but let me have two pairs of silk stockings and one pair of Garters with as much ribbin as may make me seven or eight pairs of shoo ties and one dozen of points of ye same ribbon."¹

We do not possess brother George's report on this order, but he was a faithful recorder of all he saw and heard, and despatched comments pleasant and unpleasant to his chief, with the impartiality becoming a private secretary. Thus in careful cypher he writes that:

"Sister Elizabeth told me that she wondered what the Deputy did mean to write to Lady Carlisle, whom she thought to be wild, for she showed those letters to everybody."²

Sister Elizabeth may have had good reason for her

¹ Fitzwilliam MSS.: Wentworth to Sir G. Wentworth, November 18, 1633.

² *Idem*: Sir George Wentworth to Wentworth, March 1633.

warning, since it has always been supposed that it was through this fascinating lady that Pym learnt of the intended arrest of the five members. The pamphleteers of that age, who interpreted friendships between men and women in the grossest terms, bluntly accused Wentworth of being Lady Carlisle's lover. That charge is now discredited. Lucy, Countess of Carlisle, was probably one of those women who may be said to belong to the rare order of Platonic lovers. She attracted devotion, for she was equally beautiful and witty, but when a courtship was pressed home, she "smiling put the question by". She was, said her adorer Tobie Matthews,

"likely to divert the discourse, or, at least, seem not to understand it. By which you may know her humour and her justice; for since she cannot love in earnest, she would have nothing from love."¹

Her intimacy with Henrietta Maria would alone account for the value Wentworth set on her friendship, since no one was better placed to enlighten him on the machinations of the "Queen's party". But evidently he valued the woman no less than the ally. As he wrote to Lord Conway:

"I admire and honour her, whatever be her position at Court. You might tell her sometimes when she looks at herself at night in the glass that I have the ambition to be one of those servants she will suffer to honour her."²

"Leurs sublimes s'amalgamèrent", as Madame de Sévigné would have said. He himself summed up their relations in the phrase: "a nobler or a more intelligent friendship did I never meet with in my life".³ This is high praise, especially from Strafford, yet it is not the language of a lover.

¹ Browning, *Life of Strafford*, Introduction, Sir C. Frith, lxvii-lxviii.

² *Cal. S.P. Dom. Ireland*, 1633-47, vol. ii. p. 100: Deputy to Lord Conway, March 12, 1635.

³ Whitaker, *Life of Sir George Radcliffe*, p. 221.

The official despatch authorising the calling of Parliament is dated April 12. A few days later followed a personal letter from Charles, which is too characteristic to be omitted.

"Wentworth. The great dispatch your brother brought me, has given me so much satisfaction that I could not but testify it by my own Hand. Though I know you will find my publick letters anufe to your contentment, and full anufe to make this short; yet there is one General, and one Particular that I will name to you, to take care of, to wit, the Parliament and Arundel; in a word to content them both, so far as may not be to my Prejudice. As for Arundel I need say no more; but as for that Hidra, take good heed; for you know that here I have found it as well cunning as malitious. It is trew that your grounds are well-laid, and I assure you that I have a great Trust in your care and Judgment; yet my opinion is that it will not be the worse for my service, though their obstinacy make you to break them, for I fear that they have some ground to demand more than it is fit for me to give. This I would not say, if I had not confidence in your courage and Dexterity; that, in that case you would set me down there an example what to do here.

"So I rest your assured friend,

CHARLES R."¹

Having secured the royal assent, Wentworth's next step was to bring the Council into line with his views. To draft the order which according to Poyning's Act must be sent to England for endorsement, he appointed a committee

"not only to expedite the Thing itself the more, but also better to discover how their pulses beat, wherein I conceived they would deliver themselves more freely than if I had been present amongst them myself".²

Wentworth was justified of his wisdom. Undoubtedly,

¹ *Letters*, vol. i. p. 233: King to Wentworth, April 17, 1634

² *Idem*, vol. i. pp. 237-40: Wentworth to Secretary Coke.

the Councillors' pulses beat more freely in his absence, though not to his satisfaction. That noble body evidently felt they were being rushed as to time, and, when reassured on that point, demanded the Bill of Monopolies, the Bills of Grace, and a General Pardon to accompany the subsidies "as good inducements to content the Houses". But chiefest they cavilled at leaving the amount of the subsidies required in blank. They urged a request for two subsidies, and these to be paid in twice the time Wentworth had indicated.

These propositions instantly brought Wentworth down to the Board.

"Not knowing what this might grow to, I told them plainly I feared they had begun at the Wrong End, thus counting what might please the People in a Parliament, when it would better have become a Privy Council to consider what might please the King and induce him to call one. That albeit I had not in particular, as yet to resolve them what it was His Majesty would propound, yet I knew, as all other great and wise Princes, His Majesty expected to be trusted, nor did any ever deserve it better from a people; that he would not in any case admit of conditions, or be proceeded withal, as by way of Bargain or Contract, that he would be provided for as the Head, and care for his people as members, thorough all the expressions of a gracious and good King but still according to the Order of Reason, Nature and Conscience, Himself first, his People afterwards. That as for the Bill of Monopolies it was not to be granted at all, the other Bills of Grace not seasonable now. Whereas I durst engage my Life, Children and Honour, if they went the way wise men should" [*i.e.* after supply in the second session] "they might have whatever was fit and reasonable for the good and contentment of the People."

A general Pardon, he considered, should be an act of Grace from the King, whereas the "Parliament pardon"

they designed would benefit the worst rather than the best subjects.

Wentworth's great stand was, however, on the vital subject of subsidies. He was entirely against limitation, refusing to "seem to put any constraint upon the free and cheerful hearts of the people"—a slightly optimistic description of the average tax-payer's sentiments. He privately thought he could easily have secured the Council's assent to three subsidies; as this was, however, the lowest figure he meant to ask, he did not want to cut himself off from the possibility of making a better bargain. But, as for two subsidies, he declared they "must not cast a mist upon the eyes of a wise and discerning King" by expecting him to barter away £20,000 in yearly contributions for a couple of subsidies. The King wanted the payment of the Army finally secured, "not momentarily provided for a year or two, and then be left in straiter condition than now it is". By the Council's confession, that Army was the "Nerve of Government", giving effect to the Courts of Justice, "securing the good in their private estates from being trod down by the unequal paces of Violence and Wrong". They should not therefore expect the King "to come to them once a year with Hat in Hand to intreat them to preserve themselves". Further, if they insisted on fighting against their own well-being, "His Majesty as *Pater Patriae* would not suffer it, but save them even whether they would or no, do that by his own Royal Power, which he first expected to have accomplished with their concurring assents". In fact, Wentworth practically demanded their exact concurrence with his projects; so that some of the Councillors must secretly have questioned the utility of their presence at the Council Board. No man seems, however, to have contradicted the Deputy, possibly because when he proceeded to enlarge on the scandalous fashion in which the payments had been laid "upon the

poor and bare tenants by the landlords and money men to ease themselves", their consciences did not absolve them from blame. In their secret hearts they knew that Wentworth was justified in believing that if the contributions had been differently assessed they "could have pinched no man". It was, he continued, the wish of the King that this great work should be settled by Parliament, "as the more beaten path he covets to walk in, yet not more legal than if done by his Prerogative royal, when the ordinary way fails him". In a cause so just and necessary, he, Wentworth, "could not deny to appear for him in the Head of the Army . . . it would be an honour to die in the pursuit of that wherein both Justice and Piety were to his mind involved". Before resorting to force, however, he believed that the nation would take little exception to levies charged on those who were able to bear the burden, "and who all this while have paid little or nothing".

This was a scarcely needed intimation to Cork and his abettors that their juggling with the assessments had been discovered and would be exposed. It is clear that few of the many discoveries he had made in Ireland had so outraged Wentworth's sense of public duty. Writing some time previously to Lord Cottington, Wentworth said that when the Earl became Lord Justice he had discharged his own towns wholly of their former payments, besides rectories rated at a fortieth of their value, and consequently

"laid it so much more heavily upon the rest of the inhabitants. I intend not", said Wentworth, "that Cork's wit or affection towards his friends should carry away this money from His Majesty to the increase and grudging of them that pay . . . and assure yourself rather than be brought upon the stage, he will pay it privately and desire no notice be taken of it. This is, God help us, the epidemical disease of this kingdom."¹

¹ Fitzwilliam MSS.: Wentworth to Lord Cottington.

Wentworth had not miscalculated the effect of his hint; coupled with the pledge (which they could regard as justification for their acquiescence) that the King would not touch a penny of any surplus until a £20,000 reserve was accumulated, the Council capitulated. In conclusion, Wentworth assured them that it rested with them to have the happiest Parliament if only they would "put an absolute trust in the King". Strange to say, he did not stop there. He proceeded,

"again I did beseech them to look well about, and be wise by others' Harms. They were not ignorant of the misfortunes these meetings had run in England of late years, that therefore they were not to strike their foot upon the same Stone of Distrust which had so often broken them; for I could tell them, as one that had, it may be, held my eyes as open upon these Proceedings as another man, that what other accident this mischief might be ascribed unto, there was nothing else that brought it upon us, but the King's standing justly to have the honour of Trust from his People, and an ill-grounded narrow suspicion of theirs, which would not be ever intreated, albeit it stood with all the Reason and Wisdom in the world. This was that Spirit of the Air that walked in Darkness between them, abusing both."¹

When this passage of the harangue was read at the Council Board at Whitehall, Laud reports that Cottington, the irrepressible jester, exclaimed "*quorum pars magna fui*", a jest which, it must be admitted, still appeals to posterity.²

Having secured the capitulation of the Council, with whom as great landowners, it must be remembered, the nominations of members mainly lay, Wentworth set himself with equal energy to carry out his side of the bargain. The boon for which the Council urgently petitioned was

¹ *Letters*, vol. i. p. 239.

² *Idem*, vol. i. p. 255: Laud to Wentworth, March 14, 1634.

an Act for securing their estates, and Wentworth judged a new Commission for defective titles an immediate necessity. He was determined not to pass into law the "Grace" which converted sixty years' possession into a parliamentary title. This refusal has always been held to be the head and front of Wentworth's offending, since it has been ascribed simply and solely to the desire to make money for Charles. Undoubtedly, Wentworth did desire to provide for his Budget and used that argument freely, as the best instrument to his hand in dealing with an impetuous monarch. But he was also honestly convinced that the "Grace" would have sanctioned so much injustice, condoned so many robberies, ruined so many "mean and poor" folk that it would rather have left more rankling sores than given that sense of security and finality for which the country craved. The Commission, as he designed it, was, after due inquiry, to grant a new title to any owner whose right could be proved, even though his title might not be legally flawless.¹ Where "intrusion" was proved, the owner could "compound". The titles granted by the Commission were to be forever freed from revision or revocation, which until then some greedy courtier could always threaten, and, moreover, effect, if documents were not forthcoming to buttress the owner's inheritance. Such a measure would bar and bolt the door on the "beagles", as Strafford called them, who made a living out of prying into other men's title-deeds—to the latter's destruction.

The sweeping character of the Commission created some alarm in England. The Council feared that huge tracts of country would be made over to undesirable proprietors, who would evade their feudal dues to the Crown, and hinder rather than advance the development of the kingdom. But Wentworth was insistent. He agreed that owners should compound when necessary, but parlia-

¹ O'Grady, vol. i. p. 117.

mentary titles they must and should have, and though he would refer any dubious points to the Council at Whitehall, he was determined to have the warrant which alone would enable him to pass this Act into law under the Great Seal. Eventually, after a sharp struggle, he won the day. That he was right was proved by an address from the House of Lords in the first session, begging him to speed up the measure. And in the Parliament of 1640 he received their thanks for

“the large and ample benefit which we have received, and hope to receive by His Majesty’s Commission of defective Titles procured hither by his Lordship”.¹

Like Sir Robert Walpole, Wentworth considered it was largely a question of manipulation to mould members to the Government’s wishes. Where Sir Robert employed the power of the purse, Wentworth used every means of influence that could be descried. The House of Lords was comparatively easy to manage. Until 1661 a peer could hold an unlimited number of proxies, and Wentworth saw to it that these were entrusted to men who would vote straight.

With regard to the Lower House, Wentworth strove to nominate candidates on whom he could rely. Since the boroughs were delighted to have members who would pay their own expenses, and Wentworth was careful to recommend men of means, his suggestions were eminently welcome. Sir George Wentworth sat for Bandon, one of Lord Cork’s towns, Radcliffe represented Armagh, Wandesford Kildare, Mainwaring, Wentworth’s secretary, the same who figures in Vandyke’s famous picture, was elected for Clonakilty.²

During the fourteen years which divided James I.’s from

¹ *Letters*, vol. i. p. 240: Wentworth to Coke, April 29, 1634.

² O’Grady, vol. i. p. 95.

Wentworth's Parliament, the thirty-nine new boroughs that King had created had grown in importance and were likely to swell a Protestant majority. The elections for that first Parliament had resulted in miniature battles and a hand-to-hand fight over the installation of the Speaker. Wentworth was determined that order and decorum should reign in any assembly, whether of Church or State, held in his name, and took practical steps to prevent opposing parties, in or out of Parliament, from settling their differences by blood-letting or fisticuffs. A stern order was issued forbidding Peers and Commons to wear their swords in the House of Parliament. With regard to Jesuits and priests, who gave some trouble by threatening excommunication to voters who returned Protestants, Wentworth showed by his treatment of this attempt at religious intimidation that he could hold his hand where he judged it advisable. "It was a very insufferable thing for them thus to interpose in causes which are purely Civil", he said, "and *hereafter* he purposed to question them."¹ There was no *hereafter*, however, in his handling of a Dublin Sheriff who acted on the clerical homilies. This worthy had not merely behaved "mutinously" in the election of burgesses, but had been foolish enough to give himself away on paper. He was brought before the Castle Chamber, fined £200 on one count, £500 on another, and disabled from again holding office. At the election on the following day "the voices were orderly taken". Wentworth's lesson had gone home.

Speed and secrecy had been the two conditions on which Wentworth had staked the success of his parliamentary plans. There had certainly been no waste of time, for, as soon as the King's assent was received, the day of opening was fixed for July 14. Nor had Wentworth's plan of campaign been disclosed. Besides his brother, Radcliffe, and

¹ *Letters*, vol. i. p. 270: Wentworth to Coke, June 24, 1634.

Wandesford he allowed himself no confidants, and no whisper of his designs came from London. The leaders of the various parties in Ireland were, however, sufficiently shrewd to perceive that it was to their advantage to penetrate his plans, in order that they might make theirs.

They fared ill, however, when they tried to obtain any information from the Deputy. Even the Lord Chancellor, who was not accustomed to rebuffs, was silenced by a "direct and round answer" when he moved that, according to precedent, the Lords of the Pale should be consulted.¹ The King, said Wentworth, would not take it well if outsiders were admitted to consultation. And Lord Fingall, the "outsider", sent to "bell the cat", must have rued his misguided "inquisition" as Wentworth described the curiosity of this "passing sparing and pecunious" nobleman. In fact, on reflection, Wentworth felt the snub he had administered to Fingall was so severe that another time he would "put some water in his wine".

On July 14, after a sumptuous inauguration, Parliament met.

It is amusing to remember that the only person to infringe Wentworth's regulations, and to cause anything approaching disorder, was the Earl of Ormond, the future pillar of Church and State. When "James the White", as the Irish called the fair-haired youth, presented himself at the House of Lords, Black Rod, acting on Wentworth's orders, requested him to deliver his sword. The only reply the astonished official received was "that if he had his sword, it should be in his guts",² with which remark the Earl strode into the House, far too great a personage for a mere Black Rod to restrain, and sat throughout the day with his sword by his side. Meeker governors than Went-

¹ *Letters*, vol. i. pp. 246-7: Wentworth to Coke, May 13, 1634.

² Carte, *Life of Ormonde*, vol. i. p. 130.

worth would have resented such proceedings. Ormond was instantly cited before the Council to answer for his disobedience; but his judges must have looked rather foolish when he produced the writ of summons bearing the words "*cum gladio cinctus*". The Deputy, for once taken unawares, could recall no precedent to confound the culprit, and Ormond left the Council Board free from censure.¹

As a rule a triumph over Wentworth was dearly purchased. And had he been the headstrong, intolerant tyrant he is so frequently depicted, Ormond's invaluable services might have been lost to the Crown. In his perplexity, as was his wont, Wentworth discussed the situation with Wandesford and Radcliffe. He confessed that he saw no choice between crushing so daring a spirit or making him his friend. Already in the contemplated plantation of Idough and Ormond the young Earl had given him assistance, and had drawn from him a cordial acknowledgement of his services, so that he was probably predisposed in his favour.² And Radcliffe's warm advocacy of Ormond, as an ally to be secured in the work that lay before them, tilted the balance in James Butler's favour. When the session was ended and the Deputy reported on the leaders for and against the Government, he singled out Ormond for high praise amongst his fellow-peers. In fact, Wentworth declared:

"My Lord of Ormond hath as much advantage of the rest in judgment and parts, as he hath in Estate and Blood; and one who upon my observation since I came hither, expresseth very good affection to the Crown; so as I hold him a person of consequence and fit to receive some mark of His Majesty's favour, and humbly offer it to His Majesty's wisdom whether it were not seasonable to make

¹ Lady Burghclere, *Life of Ormond*, pp. 84-5.

² Carte, v. 201: Wentworth to Earl of Ormond, Dublin, June 2, 1634.

him a Councillor; he is young but, take it from me, his is a very staid head."¹

The Deputy's petition was granted. At the early age of twenty-four Ormond became a Privy Councillor, and Wentworth never had cause to regret his decision. Ormond's loyalty stood Wentworth in good stead, and from the great Deputy Ormond acquired a training in administrative affairs which bore fruit in many transactions throughout a troublous half-century.

Members having been sworn in, the following day Wentworth went down and delivered a speech containing much the same arguments he had already pressed on the Council. The main points were that a debt of £100,000 Irish had to be extinguished, and a yearly revenue of £20,000 English guaranteed. It was impossible to effect any economies on the Civil List, or to retrench on the Martial List—the Army being the preserver of the public peace.² The only means to obtain the necessary funds would have been to impose the 12d. Sunday tax on recusants.

"But His Majesty held it more natural and proper in cases of conscience and Religion to soften and incline the hearts of men by the good examples of Life, and the sound and persuasive doctrine of his Clergy than by constraint to inforce a seeming conformity."

Consequently the levying of the tax was deferred until Wentworth arrived, and with the Council advised calling Parliament for "His Majesty to take his people along with him" to co-operate together for their good. If, then, justice and protection descended from the throne, it fell to them to see that duty and obedience should ascend thither, "being those intelligences which should pass the best entertainments betwixt a King and his people".

¹ *Letters*, vol. i. p. 352: Wentworth to Coke, Dublin Castle, December 16, 1634.

² *Idem*, vol. i. p. 287: Wentworth's Speech.

Wentworth's most earnest warning was directed against divisions. That "Spirit of the Air that walked in darkness" and had led to notable divisions at Westminster was again held up as the awful example to be avoided at Dublin. "Consults and good counsels" arrived at in the House would be graciously received, but private meetings, "muttering or, to name it more truly, mutinying in corners" were forbidden under penalty of punishment.

"Divide not", he continued, "between Protestant and Papist; for this meeting is only Civil, Religion not concerned one way or other. Divide not nationally between English and Irish. . . . The King makes no distinction between you, reputes you all without prejudice, and that upon safe and true grounds, I assure myself, his good and faithful Subjects. And madness it were in you then to raise that wall of Separation amongst yourselves. If you should, you know who the old Proverb deems likeliest to go to the wall, and, believe me, England will not prove the weakest."¹

"But above all", said Wentworth, returning to the theme he never failed to expound, since, indeed, it was the *cordium* of his faith, "divide not between the interests of the King and his people, as if there were one Being of the King and another Being of his people . . . most certain it is that their wellbeing is individually one and the same, their interests woven up together with so tender and close threads, as cannot be pulled asunder without a Rent in the Commonwealth."²

Wentworth plumed himself on having made this oration in the "mildest manner". And perhaps it contained fewer threats than his speech to the Council, though the members were warned that if they met the King with "narrow circumscribed hearts"—in plain English, in a bargaining mood—their sons would rue being the children of unbelieving parents. If the substance was mild, he, however, admitted that its delivery was otherwise. For, as he said,

¹ *Letters*, vol. i. p. 289.

² *Idem*, vol. i. p. 290.

"it was not spoken between my teeth but so loud and heartily that I protest unto you I was faint withal at the present, and the worse for two or three days after. It makes no matter, for this way I was assured they should have sound at least . . . and the success was answerable".¹

The Speaker being chosen, the House then set to work. The first move was made by the recusants, who fancied that they could expel various Governmental and Protestant members, on the score of their not residing in the divisions they represented. This plea had already been rejected when advanced in Chichester's Parliament.² Nevertheless it led to some heated argumentation. But the real tug-of-war came over the voting for the appointment of a Commission of Privileges, which the Protestants carried by a majority of eight. This enabled Wentworth for the first time to gauge the relative strength of the parties. A Protestant majority was the nearest approach he could command to a Government majority, and he now knew he was safe. With the rapid decision of a leader of men, he resolved to put the vital question of supplies to the touch. It was not only that he judged the moment opportune, he also believed that, given breathing space, cabals against the Government would spring up. He knew he was in a tight place, and he determined to rush his fences. When he called the Council, he was assured by Lord Wilmot, Ranelagh, Parsons, and even St. Leger, the loyal President of Munster, that he was courting defeat in not awaiting the outcome of the Commission of Privileges. The Chancellor and his own friends, however, supported him, and, as Ranelagh said, no one dared to oppose the Deputy's decision when once his vote was cast. Wandesford was instructed to move for supplies the next day, and the Councillors, one and all, were ordered to "speak heartily" to their friends and others in favour of

¹ *Letters*, vol. i. p. 273: Wentworth to Laud, Dublin, July 19, 1634.

² Bagwell, vol. i. p. 218.

six subsidies, to be levied in a parliamentary way in the course of four years.

Accordingly, the following day, Wandesford put the resolution for six subsidies, of which four were to be raised in the first two years. He must have felt nervous when the recusants, who happened momentarily to be in a majority, moved that the vote be deferred until the House was purged of non-resident members and carried the resolution by a majority of twenty-eight. But he stood firm; probably recognising that this was merely an accidental majority, and simply put the original motion again. In the interval the Protestants returned, and, being scared by the Papist victory, voted with the Government; while, on the other hand, the Roman Catholics, fearing they would lose the exclusive right to "honour and thanks", fell into line, with the result that supplies were unanimously voted and the House instantly resolved itself into Committee.

Wentworth had every reason to be triumphant. He had carried the day, and by his promptitude prevented that formation of hostile groups and intrigues which had so often proved the undoing of Deputies and their best laid plans.

"The rest of this Session", he wrote, "we have entertained and spun them out in discourse, but kept them nevertheless from concluding anything . . . no other Laws passed but two Acts of subsidies, and that other short law for confirming all such compositions as are or shall be made upon the Commission of Defective Titles. And thus, Sir", he concludes, with a burst of warrantable satisfaction, "have we, already, God be praised, attained more than ever I durst put you in hope of on that side."¹

Thus within the stipulated three weeks, and without any of the dreaded "mutterings", Wentworth brought the first—the King's—session to an end. Undoubtedly the

¹ *Letters*, vol. i. pp. 278-9: Wentworth to Coke, August 18, 1634.

long-drawn-out squabble between the two Houses as to whether or no the Commons, when in conference with the Peers, might sit covered in their Lordships' presence facilitated Wentworth's task. It certainly prevented a joint petition on the "Graces", which at that stage might have been awkward. But it was Wentworth's driving power that had converted what might have been a compromise into an undiluted triumph.

The next session was fixed for November, when harvesting would be concluded. Wentworth knew that it was essential to keep the members in good temper, since the refusal to bar the Crown's claims to a sixty years' possession of property would undoubtedly be a trial to Peers and Commons alike. He therefore summoned the Judges of Assize who were about to depart on circuit, and charged them to explain His Majesty's "intended favours to the people".¹

They were to explain that the imposition of contributions had been a necessity for the defence of the country and the protection of trade, but would cease that year owing to the voting of subsidies. The Commission of Defective Titles would confer perpetual advantages on the subjects, who would have even better security of tenure than Englishmen, whose titles were restricted to sixty years; moreover, all profits derived from compositions would be applied to defraying the general charges of the kingdom. The fees of officers and ministers in spiritual and temporal Courts were to be moderated and the inquiries instituted by Episcopal Courts into clandestine marriages and christenings were to be forborne. Cattle, corn, and other commodities were to be recognised as free exports. All laws enacted in England during the last hundred years were to be applicable to Ireland, and the people were invited to make

¹ *Letters*, vol. i. pp. 292-3: Wentworth to Judges of Assize, Dublin Castle, August 21, 1634.

known their wishes for any measures that they considered would tend to their good and settlement.

Lastly, as the coping-stone to all this legislation, he wished them to know that as far as it consisted with the good of the kingdom he himself would be ready "in all things that be propounded to yield them all necessary furtherance".

Wentworth was determined that funds raised in Ireland should not be spent in England, and in writing both to Portland and Laud he laid great emphasis on this point. In writing to the latter, with his habitual frankness, he did not mince matters.

"If I may be left to myself", he said, "and that the King and the Lord Treasurer will hold off their hands, and not fetch the money hence to serve present turns on that side, I will, by the help of God, set this Crown out of debt. . . . Therefore, for the love of God assist to incline them not to divert the monies here to any other use, till this Crown be first served with her own. For in good faith if they do, it will mightily discourage me, and what is much worse, infallibly and fatally ruin us in the course we are in, and turn us here quite out of the way, which we now walk in chearfulness and assuredly with most Hope to settle the affairs of this Kingdom, that there ever was since the first Conquest."¹

It was certainly not improbable that Wentworth, having been allowed to pledge his word, might nevertheless be disowned by the authorities at home. The episode of Lorenzo Carey showed how little the King's promises weighed with him when his wishes or his needs came into play. And as Wentworth confessed to Laud, "I see them on that side driven to such streights, as like sinking men, they catch hold of each twig to keep themselves above water and I am still in mortal dread of them".² Even now,

¹ *Letters*, vol. i. p. 273: Wentworth to Laud, July 19, 1634.

² *Idem*, vol. i. p. 300: Wentworth to Laud, September 1, 1634.

after Parliament's remarkable generosity, when, as Speaker Catlin said, "Sewers of water never opened their streams more fully than we have opened our purses", Wentworth had to fight an uphill battle to preserve Ireland from barefaced spoliation.¹

The "projectors", the company promoters, were one of the chief pests of the period. The Soap Company, or Trust as it might better be described, was now determined to acquire the monopoly of buying and exporting Irish tallow, and hesitated at nothing to acquire this valuable privilege. On the other hand, Wentworth was determined to fight the project to the utmost of his powers. For he was convinced that it would prejudice the whole kingdom, "being their great staple commodity, out of which they pretend are to be raised their own rents, and all the great payments to His Majesty; and, indeed, I am of opinion the course intended will infinitely discontent them all, nothing so much, and destroy their Trade above all that can be foreseen."

His honest indignation only brought against him the accusation that his objection to the proposal was due to his being one of the "farmers" of tallow. To which he scornfully rejoined that these projectors were "so blinded in their own pursuit" that they forgot that the contract passed between them and the Crown protected them from all loss, since if tallow was taxed, the deficit must be made good out of the royal rent.² "Thus you see as to the farmers, it is an herb John, doth us neither good nor harm."

Wentworth cannot be accused of sparing himself in any contest. But the cost to nerves and bodily strength is revealed in a sentence of the overworked Deputy to his friend Cottington.

¹ O'Grady, vol. i. p. 127.

² Fitzwilliam MSS.: Wentworth to Laud, December 9, 1634.

“By my troth, my Lord, in good earnest I grow extremely old, and full of Grey Hairs since I came into this Kingdom, and should wax exceeding melancholy were it not for two little girls that come now and then to play by me. Remember, I tell you, I am of no long life.”¹

¹ *Letters*, vol. i. p. 294: Wentworth to Cottington, Dublin Castle, August 22, 1634.

CHAPTER XV

THE first session had left Wentworth a successful but a tired man, and the prospect of the struggle that lay before him when Parliament discovered that the sixty years' title to property would be refused was scarcely encouraging. Knowing the temper of the people he governed, and the value they set on signs of royal favour, involving, as they realised, the support of the home authorities, he wrote to Charles to ask "if his family might be honoured by an earldom". Since his services had exceeded the most optimistic anticipations, he had every reason, apart from the advantage to the King's service, to expect that they would be recognised. Acute observer though he was, however, Wentworth, not for the first or last time, mistook the man with whom he had to deal; and the King's reply to his well-grounded petition might well have estranged any save the most faithful servant—a servant who, though ambitious, was yet so proud that to solicit a favour even from his "Great Master" entailed an effort to which little but a sense of the moral backing it afforded could have induced him to stoop.¹

"Wentworth", wrote Charles,

"Before I answer any of your particular letters to me, I must tell you that your last public despatch has given me a great deal of contentment, and especially for keeping of the envy of a necessary negative from me, of those unreasonable graces that that People expected from me,

¹ *Letters*, vol. i. p. 302: Wentworth to King, Dublin, September 20, 1634.

not in one particular dissenting from your opinion (that is of moment, as I remember) but concerning the Tallow, and that but *ad referendum* neither. Now I will begin concerning your suit, though last come to my hands; and first for the form, that is to say, in coming to me, not only primarily but solely, without so much as acquainting anybody with it, the Bearer being as ignorant as any; This I do not only commend, but recommend to you to follow always hereafter, at least in what concerns your own particular. For, to Servants of Your Quality (and some degrees under too) I allow of no mediators, though Friends are commendable; for the Dependence must come merely from me and to me. And as for matter, I desire you not to think that I am displeased with the asking, though for the present I grant it not. For I acknowledge that noble minds are always accompanied with lawful ambitions. And be confident that your Services have moved me more than it is possible for any Eloquence or importunity to do. So that your Letters was not the first proposing putting marks of Favour on you; and I am certain that you will willingly stay my Time, now ye know my mind so freely, that I may do all Things *a mio modo*; and so rest your assured friend,
CHARLES REX."¹

We may doubt whether the implication that Wentworth was the possessor of a "noble mind" salved the wound dealt by the King alike to his "lawful ambition" and proud spirit. That he continued to work, not for reward but for the attainment of his twin ideals of the unity of King and People, is proved by the unrelenting zeal with which he pursued his labours. Yet the famous outcry of a disillusioned spirit, "put not your trust in princes", might already have escaped him on the receipt of the Sovereign's epistle.

Wentworth's petition was dated September 20. The King's answer of October 23 must have reached him on

¹ *Letters*, vol. i. pp. 331-2: King to Wentworth, Hampton Court, October 23, 1634.

the eve of the meeting of Parliament. These weeks had been full not only of political but of domestic anxieties. In September he received the news of a beloved sister's death, and, as usual, he poured out his heart to Laud on the subject.

"I am much bound to your Lordship for ye good health you wish me, but am persuaded I shall not last long, for of eleven brothers and sisters yt we were, there are but five left already, and yesternight came hither the sad tidings of ye Death of my best and dearest Sister, even as her husband, I myself, and others were at Supper, merry and little dreaming of soe great and near an Affliction. This doth disorder me and I fear you will find it before I get to an end. And her poor husband, to help the matter, is so extreame passionate as indeed grieves me above measure. But I trust to gather my Spirits up again, howbeit these accidents which befall my friends, and ye symptoms I feel for speedy decay in myself make me more Anchorite than the world takes me to be. And truly since by His Majesty's gracious favour the wardship of my Son is provided for, I consider all without the least trouble or melancholy."¹

Wentworth had cause to regard his family as short-lived, since already in the previous year he had lost another sister, Lady Savile, the mother of the youth to whom he had acted a father's part. Stately condolences flowed readily off the pens of his generation, while the least saintly individuals contrived edifying homilies on the brevity of Life, and the awfulness of Eternity. The following letter, however, breathes not merely the warm affection for kith and kin characteristic of Wentworth, but knits up the ages, as any genuine and unaffected sentiment struck from the bedrock of human nature must needs do.

"My deare Sister,—In the general losses we all sustained by the death of my Sister Savile, I cannot but con-

¹ Fitzwilliam MSS.: Wentworth to Laud, September 12, 1634.

template your losses in particular to be as great and grievous both in itself and in your own estimation as any other amongst us. I am passing sorry that I am at this instant soe remote from you as I cannot by word of mouth let you know how sensible I am in a matter which soe much imports you. Yet I shall at least by these lines let you see I cannot be unmindful of you whenever there shall be a meanes offered unto me of serving you.

"Receive then these visitations as they are indeed fitt and necessary remembrances unto us that we are not to expect here any abiding cittys, but that we are all in our turnes, one after another, to make ourselves fitt to be translated hence into Everlasting habitations. And till that dissolution come upon us, let us comfort ourselves in this that we have sent before us a Sister whose piety, as it hath now purchased a reward for itself which cannot be taken from her, soe hath it left behind it unto us a pattern to follow and better ourselves by, which God grant us the Grace, to doe.

"Rest that blessed Sister in peace then, and let us not trespass soe far to her memory as to neglect ourselves.

"What Course you will resolve of I know not. But if there be any thing which I possess that may give you any Contentment you may command it. If you please to come hither to me you shall be most wellcome. The longer you stay the better.

"In what other place you shall like better to bestow yourself I will in *your own way serve you the best I can*, so soone as I may be soe much beholden to you to afford me the meanes of doing it for you. Of this I beseech you be most assured, and that I can never be found other then intirely and perfectly,

"Your most faithful loving brother and servant,

WENTWORTH."¹

As is the way of life, birth and death followed hard on each other in Wentworth's home. The news of his sister's death reached him on September 11, and on September 17

¹ Fitzwilliam MSS.: Wentworth to Mistress Wentworth, Dublin, August 27, 1633.

the son he had so ardently desired was born into the house of mourning.

Lord Cork in his diary noted the fact that "good Lady Wentworth" had borne the Deputy a son, whom he piously besought God to bless and "to make a good man", adding, perhaps with a view to the infant's horoscope, that he had been ushered into this world under the sign of Sagittarius.¹ Sagittarius, or the Archer, proved no happy augury to "Litell Tom", as his mother fondly called him. Two years later, the puny, ailing child was laid to rest at Christ Church, attended by the whole Privy Council with every circumstance of singularly inappropriate pomp.

At the first session of Parliament the Commons had drawn up a list of fifty-one measures to be entered on the Statute Book. These proposals Wentworth duly forwarded to the King, accompanied by his own and the Council's comments. A number of the grievances alleged, such as the private clerical prisons for "contumacious" persons, and the excessive fees claimed by Sheriffs and other officials, had already been abolished or reformed by the Lord Deputy, who considered the passing of Statutes on these subjects a work of supererogation. Indeed, it is clear that whenever he could meet the case by Orders in Council, he preferred that course to legislation. This was not solely due to an autocrat's desire to keep the reins of government in his hands. First and foremost, Wentworth was an administrator thirsting to sweep away abuses, and anxious to avoid overloading the Statute Book, and thereby, through a series of cut-and-dried Acts, diminishing the elasticity of administration. It was a bold course, and eventually proved perilous to Strafford himself, though undoubtedly the social condition of Ireland at that period imperatively called for swift decisions. As to the Commons' petitions, wherever he felt it possible, without impairing the work of

¹ *Lismore Papers*, vol. iv. p. 46, September 17, 1634.

settlement, which he counted on achieving by means either of the Commission of Defective Titles, the future Plantation of Connaught, or the Court of Wards, Wentworth was anxious to meet their wishes. He was as eager as any Irishman for measures that would foster and free trade from its actual or potential trammels.¹ And in reply to Grace forty, requiring "denization" of Scottish "undertakers" and their heirs and assigns, he suggested an additional Naturalisation Act, which he hoped would further the welding of the nation into an indivisible whole.

On the other hand, Wentworth was resolutely opposed to some of the proposals, and it must be admitted that common sense was on his side. For instance, the petition to transfer soldiers accused of capital crime from martial to civil tribunals, composed of "persons of quality having freehold and residence in the country", or failing these, to a judicial commission from which all military members were carefully excluded, deserved Wentworth's sardonic comment that there would then be "no need of a General and consequently no discipline in the Army". Again, knowing how difficult it was to extract true testimony from witnesses, there is something to be said for his objection to clause forty-three, which forbade their being bound over to the Castle Chamber. There was no reason, he declared, to put "a causeless prejudice upon His Majesty's Ministers of Justice".

Out of the original forty "Graces", three only were finally rejected, though it must be admitted that these were the most important.² The reasons for their rejection, however, deserve a more impartial examination than they have usually obtained.

First in importance was the Statute of Limitations already described. Next, a Grace for all Ulster planters, who at the cost of a fine and increased rent were to re-

¹ O'Grady, vol. i. pp. 326-7.

² *Idem*, vol. i. p. 130.

ceive new patents establishing them on their lands, while Grace twenty-five interdicted the future planting of Connaught.¹

The awkward feature regarding the rejection of these measures was the undoubted fact that Charles, without consultation with his Irish Council or the knowledge of the Deputy Lord Falkland, had given them his assent. Ussher and Loftus subsequently declared that the contributions granted by the Irish agents were not the price paid for the said contributions.² Ussher was truthful, and his statement must carry weight, but at any rate the royal concessions induced the agents to show themselves accommodating. As we know, a succession of accidents intervened to hinder the passing of the "Graces" into law; and Wentworth soon discovered that the sixty years' title would sanction a multitude of injustices. Ireland was only emerging from the seething-pot, and "intrusions" on property were too often rather the normal than the abnormal conditions of land tenure—especially on ecclesiastical holdings. An impartial tribunal to sift every disputed claim and adjudicate on its merits appeared preferable to a general whitewashing of land-grabbers. And so long as Wentworth bore rule this was no Utopian dream. The drawback to judicial rather than legislative action was that, when his strong hand was removed, justice might be far to seek. Indeed, this was what happened in 1641, though he can scarcely be held responsible for the chaos that ensued after his fall. It required a prophetic spirit to anticipate such a series of revolutions as took place in England and Ireland, and their mutual reactions on each other.

With regard to the present, though Wentworth could terrorise the Council on minor points, he was not sufficiently powerful to do so when it came to such crucial matters as their properties. Where this came into play

¹ *Letters*, vol. i. p. 321.

² O'Grady, vol i. p. 129.

the most despotic Governor was bound to meet with opposition. Some of the Councillors—not unnaturally—would have preferred to be maintained in their “intrusions”; but when confronted individually, and as members of the Most Honourable Privy Council with the momentous decision, they capitulated and signed the letter to the King disowning the “Graces”.

What was true of Ireland outside Ulster was even more true of that province. The “rapines” and illegal evasions of covenants, especially with regard to ecclesiastical and charitable institutions, were legion, and since they had been committed within memory of man they were more open to revision.

We have grown to see that Plantations were an essential error. It is doubtful whether our modern highly trained Civil Service could effect so sweeping a measure without doing more harm than good. But if we try to visualise seventeenth-century Ireland through the glasses of contemporary Englishmen, and those statesmen who stood to derive no profit from the scheme, we understand that Connaught with its semi-feudal, semi-tribal, and wholly uncivilised conditions seemed to call for drastic rehandling. In the rest of Ireland modern tenures had come into existence.¹ In Connaught soccage tenures were the rule, with the result that the other provinces were more heavily taxed for the dues on which Connaught escaped payment. This latter argument was bound to influence Wentworth, who has been habitually reproached for giving too much weight to monetary considerations—though it is never explained how he could propel a backward country along the path of progress if destitute of means. Nor was it alone the immediate future that swayed his judgement. For as his “apostille” on Grace twenty-four remarks, owing to its sea-board, Connaught, actually the weakest part of the

¹ O’Grady, vol. i. p. 132.

kingdom, might be converted into a centre of "great strength and commerce".

When dealing with matters temporal, it is possible for us approximately to follow Wentworth. The great cleavage that exists between our conceptions and those of his age on matters spiritual, is brought home to us when he proceeds to say that if plantations are hindered, not merely a principal means of civilising the population but also of "planting Religion will be lost". It was this consideration that underlay his defence of the Court of Wards. Doctrinal theology affected him little.

"I see plainly", he told Coke, "that so long as this kingdom continues Popish they are not a people for the Crown of England to be confident of, whereas, if they were not still distempered by the infusion of their Friars and Jesuits, I am of Belief they would be as good and loyal to their King as any other Subjects."¹

Wentworth may have been right in thinking that young minors of good family ran a better chance of being well educated in England than in Ireland, the rather that Trinity College, Dublin, was still in its infancy, and indeed passing through an unsatisfactory phase of its notable existence. But a system which contemplated carrying off children for the express purpose of rearing them in a religion abhorrent to their kindred stands self-condemned. It is true that Ormond was a shining recommendation of this method. James Butler was, however, the exception to almost every rule in Ireland, and Wentworth might have remembered that Hugh O'Neill had been bred at the Court of Queen Elizabeth.

If Wentworth sedulously guarded the King's prerogative, he was no less anxious that justice should be done to the people at large. As he wrote to Coke, a service of necessity, "fit to put off the envy from my Master, nay,

¹ *Letters*, vol. i. p. 351: Wentworth to Coke, Dec. 16, 1634.

from myself as far as may be", was to discharge "with honour and indifferency the Debts of the Crown according to the reason and justice of each man's demand".¹ He therefore considered it would be "of great advantage to lay the Parliament upon this scent, so soon as they met, which assure yourself they will pursue with open mouth". Unlike England, where financial alarms and excursions could assume uncomfortable developments, no such danger, thanks to Poyning's Act, threatened the Irish Executive. For, as Wentworth sardonically remarked,

"we have this Lyme hound in our power still to take off where we please, which is not so easy with your Parliaments in England, where sometimes they hunt loose, forth of command, chase and give over their own game as they list themselves".

When Parliament reassembled on November 4, Wentworth was quickly made to realise that, despite Poyning's Act, Irish members could also "hunt loose forth of command". Owing to some delay in the English orders the actual announcement that the three coveted "Graces" would not be passed into law was not made until November 27. Then the storm burst in good earnest. The angry Protestant party did not trouble to keep a Government majority, and for a space the recusants carried all before them. It is characteristic of Irish politicians of that period, that they found their leader—"ringleader", Wentworth bitterly called him—in Sir Piers Crosby, a member of the Council, who had himself signed the protestation against the "Graces".

A Privy Councillor, at that date, when Cabinets had not as yet taken shape, occupied very much the same position that a minister without portfolio now occupies. Even had he not countersigned the protest, his attack on the Govern-

¹ *Letters*, vol. i. p. 305.

ment was therefore indefensible, but the fact that he was a Commissioner for the Ulster Plantation and stood to benefit considerably if he procured patents for the undertakers, probably made him reckless of consequences. It was, moreover, a novelty for an Irish Deputy to carry the measures countersigned by his Council, when these became obnoxious to the latter. Possibly Sir Piers did not realise the altered régime, or, again, carrying as he did a great deal of influence both in the north and also, owing to his family connections, in the south, he may have felt he was invulnerable. His unlucky boast that at his word four hundred swords in Kerry would leap from their scabbards shows that modesty was not his strong point.¹

For the moment certainly he carried everything before him, and, strong Protestant though he was, succeeded in cheering on the recusants to a massacre of Government Bills. Wentworth wrote ruefully:

"the Bill against Bigamy they would not should be engrossed; the Law for Correction Houses they absolutely cast out, the Law against fraudulent conveyances and to secure purchasers against the practised cozenage of the Natives they would have none of . . . the Statutes of Uses and Wills we durst not adventure a reading unto for fear some blemish might be put upon it by these men, that in all things never gave an answered reason, but plainly let us see that their wills were to refuse all, but to refute nothing!"²

Finally the climax was reached when, through Sir Piers's personal efforts, the Bill for punishing accessories to murder was ignominiously thrown out.

It was a splendid piece of bluff, but Crosby failed to realise that Wentworth was the one Irish Governor who would not hesitate to call his bluff—and bluff is a poor thing when it is "called".

¹ *Letters*, vol. i. p. 351: Wentworth to Coke, December 16, 1634.

² *Idem*, vol. i. p. 350.

Had this "froward sullenness" lasted, Wentworth was resolved to adjourn the House and to appeal for directions to Charles. The revolt of a Parliament, for whose docility he had practically pledged himself to the King, was eminently disquieting, and yet more the prospect that all the legislation on which he counted to further the country's moral and material well-being was imperilled.

"I confess", he says, "I was very much troubled at this, for albeit the King had got his supply, I was wondrous unwilling any malevolent tongue should seemingly charge us that having served the King, we now meanly became careless of what in Honour and Justice we ought to this people; extreme loth so many good Laws should be lost which might be of excellent use in the future reducement of this Kingdom to Civility and to a peaceable and sure temper of Government; and disdained also to see all this carried by that Party without all reason, with so much Triumph and neglect both of the Protestants, and all His Majesty's other ministers on this side."¹

If he did not act quickly, he foresaw that "this humour would soon be incurable", and, consequently, he determined on "a bold adventure to try our strength, and if we carried it not then instantly to adjourn".

The first step in the "bold adventure" was to bring Crosby to book, which was effected by George Radcliffe acquainting the Council with Sir Piers's "demeanour" in the House, whereupon the twenty-eight Councillors present at the Council Board voted his sequestration.

Next, Wentworth besought the Protestant party not to allow "the good ordinances transmitted for their future peace and good Government to be thus disdainfully trodden under foot by a company of wilful, insolent people envious both to their Religion and their Peace". Much as a modern Whip might do, he urged them to attend the

¹ *Letters*, vol. i. pp. 350-51.

House for ten or twelve days, and his appeal carried the day. They flocked back; and a test question, the expulsion of Geoffrey Bacon, one of the "most mutinous and bold" members, having been carried by sixteen votes, Wentworth knew he once more held victory within his grasp.

"Ever since", he wrote, "we have plied them with warm clothes; and howbeit they divide upon every Law that passeth, how good soever it be, and keep constantly upon the Pitch of ninety-five, yet have the Protestants overruled them and passed all the Laws, amongst the rest, those of Uses and Wills, the beneficial operation whereof, I am most confident, the Crown will find hereafter in the Court of Wards, so as now we have in the Common House effected all we desire and shall, I hope, pass them with the Lords without all scruples."

To Laud he was even more jubilant, and certainly more explicit.

"I can say the King is as absolute here as any Prince in the whole world can be, and may be still if it be not spoiled on that side. For so long as His Majesty shall have here a Deputy of Faith and Understanding, and that he be preserved in Credit, and independent upon any but the King himself, let it be laid as a ground, it is the Deputy's fault, if the King be denied any reasonable Desire."¹

Absolutism was abhorrent to Mr. Gardiner, but when so impartial a critic declares that "no such series of wise and beneficial laws had ever been enacted in Ireland" as those now placed on the Statute Book, we must admit that the Deputy did not overstate the value of the fresh legislation.²

Indeed, legislation which stood for the expediting of justice by deferring cases to the courts, instead of leaving prisoners to linger in prison awaiting the tardy decisions

¹ *Letters*, vol. i. p. 344: Wentworth to Laud, December 16, 1634.

² Gardiner, vol. viii. p. 52.

of a Council overburdened with business was an undoubted boon.¹ Again, the supervision and maintenance of roads and bridges by the Justices was exactly the type of practical reform of which the country stood in need.

The benefits of the Act forbidding secret feoffments and the Statute of Wills and Uses were more open to challenge. Secret feoffments, or transfers of property to trustees, were often effected at the cost of the wretched purchaser, who, after he had bought an estate, discovered that the vendor had disposed of lands no longer under his control, and that consequently, he, the purchaser, could not prove the title which he believed he had acquired.² Such trickery deserved to be rooted out. On the other hand, landowners, who to evade feudal dues for their heirs, frequently resorted to death-bed feoffments, were debarred from making such arrangements, while the great estates, as a whole, now came under the Court of Wards. The King's revenue was raised from £8000 to £10,000, but the unpopularity now enjoyed by the Board of Inland Revenue was thereby concentrated on Wentworth's head. At the Restoration the Court of Wards was swept away, and in its place a hearth tax was imposed, which bore hardly on the poorer classes.

Thoroughly satisfied as he now was with Parliament, Wentworth ardently desired to keep so useful an instrument in being as the best means to forward the many reforms he had in view. From the beginning he had said, "to pass to the extraordinary before there be an attempt at least to effect it with ease were to love difficulties too well". He urged on Coke as "a point of great consequence" the advantages of proroguing rather than dissolving Parliament.³ Never again, he felt, could so well composed a House be brought together. "Hurtful then it cannot be,

¹ O'Grady, vol. i. pp. 141-2.

² *Idem*, vol. i. p. 142.

³ *Letters*, vol. i. pp. 183, 353: Wentworth to Coke, Dublin, December 16, 1634.

but useful in divers respects I conceive it will be, to keep it on foot by Prorogations."

Unfortunately his pleadings were rejected. Charles's inveterate prejudice against Parliaments, which, according to him, "like cats, grow curst with age", was not to be overcome. Wentworth was reduced to ruling Ireland with no greater safeguard than a Council always ready to disown their own acts and signatures.¹

It was not alone with the Irish that Wentworth had to struggle practically single-handed. The Soap Company, who wished to engross the entire stock of tallow at their own price, commanded the backing "of a very great one", and thus could bring many and powerful influences to bear on the King.² Though Wentworth had declared that it would be a Deputy's fault if the Sovereign was denied any "*reasonable desire*", he did not fear to run counter to Charles's wishes when they appeared unreasonable.

"I have ever held it most unsafe", he said, "to set restraints upon the Staple commodities of a kingdom; for where the generality is concerned in their livelihoods there the less you meddle the better; and this at one blow toucheth most deeply upon Tallow and Hides, which are of more worth than all the Commodities they have besides. Judge you what a business it would be in England sole buying and exporting of wool and cloth in one hand; and the same will this be in this Kingdom. I will not repeat of theirs but the Faith I owe His Majesty in this place requires me humbly to certify my opinion, which is in brief that I am persuaded if this restraint goes on, all the merchant strangers will presently leave this kingdom, Tallow and Hides being in effect that which balanceth the whole Trade, and we having no merchants or Ships of our own, there will be a fearful stand of Commodities."

When Laud declared that it was a "greasy business", he

¹ *Letters*, vol. i. p. 365: King to Wentworth, January 22, 1634/35.

² Fitzwilliam MSS.: Wentworth to Laud, December 9, 1634.

was certainly justified, and Wentworth's indignant protest, "is it not therefore sufficient the markets be open to them to buy as other merchants, but that the whole Trade and Livelihood of a Kingdom be thus endangered?" might have fallen on deaf ears, if his known financial ability had not given weight to his prediction that £60,000 of subsidies would be lost if the fatal restraint was pressed.

Later, Wentworth had to combat other unfair impositions on Irish trade and, regardless of the personal consequences, fought and won.

"To my poor understanding", he told Laud, "in all these public businesses of State no one Kingdom ought to be considered apart, but as it stands in relation to that other, and that taken which makes best for ye whole."¹

Nowadays this is an age-worn platitude. In the seventeenth century it was a daring thesis for Ireland's Viceroy to maintain.

One distinctly unpleasant business remained to be decided when Parliament dispersed, since, though Sir Piers Crosby had been sequestered from the Privy Council, opinions differed as to making his exclusion permanent. Wentworth had no personal bias against him, yet he considered that for example's sake the knight should be "absolutely put off the Table" as a reasonable reproof not only to him but to all such libertines as himself.²

He could see little save formality, a pettifoggish and carping spirit in Sir Piers, whom he adjudged "a gentleman of so fine and tender parts as qualifies him better for a lady's chamber", an Adonis rather than a Mars.³ And apart from his undoubted gallantry at the Ile de Rhé, the Deputy's judgement was probably not unduly severe.

¹ Fitzwilliam MSS.: Wentworth to Laud, November 2, 1635.

² *Letters*, vol. i. pp. 351, 352: Wentworth to Coke, December 16, 1634.

³ *Cal. S.P. Charles I., Ireland, 1635*, vol. ii. p. 100: Wentworth to Lord Conway, March 12.

Where Wentworth was mistaken was in his estimate of the harm Piers could do. It is never wise to despise your enemies, and scorn of such men was Wentworth's besetting sin. On his dismissal being made absolute, Crosby allied himself with the Queen's party—a step which his friendship with Lord Holland facilitated—and knowing Ireland and the Irish as only a native in both camps could know them, he was able to point out the vulnerable points in the great Proconsul and his administration.

Troublesome as the Crosby business was, it did not affect Wentworth's satisfaction at the general condition of affairs, since at this juncture he was indeed riding on the crest of the wave. The complaints of his autocratic methods which echoed back from Whitehall he seems to have regarded as incidental to his position, though he took the trouble to justify himself in a letter to Laud regarding one episode. After explaining that the Primate had retired to Drogheda, being sore pressed by debts, from which, however, Bramhall hoped to deliver him, having made an additional £1200 a year for Ussher by a new contract with the Archbishop's tenants, he continues:

"I can believe it very well his retirement may be laid to my charge, or anything else yt is bad, which are no other than the effects of my round and thorough proceedings in ye affaire of my master and the Church. There are some yt delight to have it thought I were through my rage and severity become uninhabitable to all mankind besides, and yet I call upon them even to defiance, name one, not my Lord Primate, but yt man I have used with incivility, name me ye person yt I have wronged in his Estate, name me the Creature yt hath been denyed justice when I was able to help him to it. Charge me with the least corruption or Partiality in dispensing of His Majesty's princely trusts. If they neither doe any of these nor yet quiet their foul mouths, they shall lose their jest quite, for I vow to God and man all this and as much more as Calumny and Mis-

chief can invent shall not make me decline one hair from my Faith to the Crown, nor cool in the motion of my zeale to my Master's Service and Justice.

It is true my Lord I must confess if in any place of ye world the saying be verified it is here, *Tanti eris aliis quanti tibi fueris*. And impossible had it been for me, to have performed those duties I have gone through (which because their false reports put me to speake this truth of myself) I will affirm have not been exceeded by any honoured with this Government before me, unless I had put on some of the Lyon's Skinn and let them find ye King was to be obeyed in just and honourable ways whether they would or no. Again I have sharply, and I confess cordially, expressed a mighty hatred and disdain upon ye discovery of notorious oppression and sacrilegious takings, as they have been brought before me at Council Table and elsewhere. And he that thinks this notion is to be quenched in *their most inhuman thirst of drinking up one another as water*, by other coolers, is ye most mistaken that can be. For it is with them as ye old man found to be with him in ye inward man, who having heard ye preacher, said he liked him well, he was a fine man, spake very well, sweetly and comfortably, yet that he was too mild for his purpose. For, quoth he, I am an old fellow and must be breed soundly. (Do you know what a Bree is?) It is an ill-favoured fly yt stings Cattle damnably in Summer.”¹

¹ Fitzwilliam MSS.: Wentworth to Laud, January 3, 1635.

CHAPTER XVI

WENTWORTH, as we know, was convinced that no less than the temporal did the spiritual estate require reformation, and that the first step in this direction was the approximation of the Irish to the English Establishment.

The fact that they were almost submerged by Romanists had naturally intensified the Protestantism of clergy and laity, and nowhere more so than in Ulster. Thus such sentiment as existed was hostile to the amendments and discipline which Wentworth, seconded by Bramhall and the little group of High Churchmen, desired to introduce into the offices and ceremonial of the Church.

From Ussher, the Primate of all Ireland, Wentworth was not likely to obtain much assistance. Age had mellowed Ussher's earlier Calvinism; he was profoundly learned and truly good, but a poor administrator and no organiser. Wentworth respected the man and the scholar, but was irritated when the Archbishop proved impotent to deal with greedy landowners and headstrong ministers. Being thoroughly practical himself, he could not understand a bishop acquiescing in scandalous seizures of glebes and advowsons, and reserving his wrath, as Wentworth told Laud, for

"a playhouse lately set up and allowed by me, which out of purity of zeale ye Primate during my being in England had prohibited, lest it might, forsooth, have brought a punishment of Plague upon us. His Grace is very angry

with me, and saith I neither care for Church nor Churchmen, when my own ends come in question.”¹

Since a few days earlier Ussher had told him that he, Wentworth, had done more to help him than all his Council, the Deputy was distinctly injured by the accusation. “I had rather rise betimes to hear his Lordship in the Pulpit at seven, than practise him when he is forth of it any part of the day after”, he grumbled to Laud. But though he complained of Ussher, and he and the Primate had frequent differences, and even small quarrels, these were the fallings out of friends. In the margin of this very letter, a penitent P.S. runs: “the Lord Primate and I are again upon terms of very great kindness”.

Had Ussher been more capable of grappling with the practical problems which at that stage confronted a would-be reformer of the Irish Church, it is possible that Wentworth might have escaped much of the odium brought upon him by Bramhall, who acted throughout as his lieutenant in ecclesiastical matters. True, soft words would not have forced the robbers to disgorge Church property, or reduced recalcitrant preachers to obedience, but a more conciliatory attitude than Bramhall’s might have enlisted moderate opinion on the side of authority. At any rate, the destructive charge of Arminianism could not have been launched against so strong an Evangelical.

The first Convocation had taken place at Dublin in 1613, when the Articles for the Church of Ireland had had been drawn up and endorsed by that Assembly.² They numbered 104, and were generally ascribed to Ussher, then a Professor of Divinity at Trinity College. Undoubtedly they reflected the Calvinistic tenets which he held at this period, being distinctly Predestinarian and anti-Papistical in character. The Pope figures as the

¹ Fitzwilliam MSS.: Wentworth to Laud, July 10, 1637.

² Bagwell, vol. i. p. 228.

“Bishop of Rome” in the Thirty-nine Articles, whereas, in the Irish Articles of 1613, he has developed into “that man of Sin foretold in the Holy Scriptures, whom the Lord shall consume”.

Wentworth was not attached to theological niceties, but he was determined that the Thirty-nine Articles should be adopted by the Irish Church; and though Ussher favoured his own Confession of Faith, he agreed to the enactment of the English Articles, on the condition that the Irish ones should remain unrepealed. The House of Bishops accordingly voted for the adoption of the Thirty-nine Articles. But the Lower House were less ready to disown their handiwork. It is not in human nature, least of all in theologians' nature, cheerfully to submit to an open stultification of their recent acts. The Primate thought this could be effected by omitting all mention of the original Articles. When, however, discussions began, he suddenly realised that the clergy were not as conformable as he had imagined. Wentworth was engrossed by the revolt of the Commons, and during his absence the clerics took the bit between their teeth. The Chairman of the Committee elected to consider the Canons of the Church of England was a certain Andrews, Dean of Limerick. Without the customary reference to the Bishops, the Committee proceeded, under his direction, to draw up a list of the Canons, setting A against those which met with their approval, and D for *Deliberandum* (Deliberation) against those which they had practically marked down for rejection. Further, they decided that the whole 104 Articles of the Church of Ireland were to be received under pain of excommunication, and having drawn up the said Canons, they announced they would submit them to Convocation.

This not wholly unnatural revolt was a rude awakening for Wentworth, who, as he said, had “rested hitherto

secure upon that judgment of his [Ussher's] and had, indeed, leaned upon that belief",¹ whereas now he discovered that legislation which would create a gulf between the two Churches was about to be initiated on that very day. Though he does not state it, he probably referred to Bramhall for full information, and then bestirred himself in characteristically prompt and vigorous fashion. The ensuing scene should be given in his own words to Laud.

"I instantly sent for Andrews, that Reverend Clerk, who sat, forsooth, in the Chair at this Committee, requiring him to bring along the foresaid Book of Canons, so noted on the margin, together with the draught he was to present to the House, this he obeyed. . . . But when I came to open the Book and run over their Deliberandums in the margin, I confess I was not so much moved since I was in Ireland. I told him certainly not a Dean of Limerick, but an Ananias had sate in the Chair of that Committee; however, sure I was, Ananias had been there in spirit, if not in body with all the Fraternities and Conventicles of Amsterdam; that I was ashamed and scandalised with it above measure, I therefore said he should leave the Book and draught with me, and that I did command him upon his Allegiance he should report nothing to the House from that Committee till he heard again from me."

The next step was to summon the Primate, four or five Bishops, Dean Lesley, the Prolocutor of the Lower House, and all the members of the Committee, to his presence. The latter fared no better than their luckless chairman.

They were "publickly" told how unlike clergymen that owed canonical obedience to their superiors they had acted;

"how unheard a part it was for a few petty clerks to presume to make Articles of Faith without the privity or consent of State or Bishop; what a spirit of Brownism and Contradiction I observed in their *Deliberandums*, as if

¹ *Letters*, vol. i. pp. 342-3: Wentworth to Laud, December 16, 1634.

indeed they purposed at once to take away all Government and Order forth of the Church and leave every man to choose his own high place, where liked him best. But these heady and arrogant courses they must know I was not to endure, nor if they were disposed to be frantick in this dead and cold Season of the year, would I suffer them either to be mad in the Convocation or in their Pulpits."

The two Deans, Andrews and Lesley, were then told that they were not to allow any report from the Committee to be sent up to the House; and that the question as to receiving the Articles of the Church of England should be merely voted "content" or "not content", as Wentworth would not allow the Articles of the English Church to be disputed. The Primate was "desired" to frame a Canon conveying their acceptance, which Wentworth himself would then enclose in a covering letter to the Prolocutor. "Some hot spirits, sons of thunder" cavilled at these decrees, demanding a free synod. But when it came to the point, they could not agree as to who should be the bold man to "bell the cat", and so, says Wentworth, "this likewise vanished".

Ussher argued with Wentworth over the wording of the formula, but even the Primate was not allowed his own way. Wentworth told Ussher that he understood the House better than he did—and so it proved. The wording of the Canon as Wentworth drafted it, "more after the words of the Canon in England", was passed with only one dissentient voice. But, as Ussher had suggested, the Irish Articles were allowed to subsist, tacked on to the Thirty-nine Articles, with a warning that if any man dared to impugn the latter as "superstitious or erroneous"¹ he would incur excommunication. Slight differences were allowed in the Canons of the two Churches—rather to Ussher's than to Wentworth's satisfaction. The whole

¹ Bagwell, vol. i. p. 229.

episode did not increase Wentworth's faith in the Primate's judgement, though he deprecated any blame being attached to "so learned a Prelate, and so good a man".¹

As to his own action, the Deputy realised that few of his doings would earn him such ill-will from the Puritan party in England.

"How I shall be able to sustain myself against your Prynnes, Pims and Bens with the rest of that generation of odd names and natures the Lord knows. Sure I am", he tells Laud, "I have gone herein with an upright heart, to prevent a Breach, seeming at least, betwixt the Churches of England and Ireland. Yet in regard I have gone herein out of my sphere, I beseech your Lordship to take me so far into your care, as that you procure me a letter from His Majesty either of allowance for what I have done, or for my Absolution if I have gone too far."

Indeed, if, after all, Laud wished for the reinstatement of the Irish Articles, he would see to this being effected at the next Convocation.

Dean Andrews was not forgotten, and his treatment is an example of the grim humour so characteristic of Wentworth. The bishopric of Fernes was vacant by the death of its incumbent, a bishopric "so saddle girt and Spur galled as if the Devil himself were the rider".² Wentworth suggested that the unlucky "Ananias" should be promoted to this barren see, inferior in revenues to his deanery, and hold it without any more *commendams* than had fallen to the share of his predecessor. The mirth of the sardonic Deputy was great when the Dean jumped at the proposal.

"His Lordship elect", said Wentworth, "gave us a farewell sermon this Lent that had fasted sure, for a lean one it was; only he commended the times, and said, '*how long, how long have we heretofore expected Preferment and missed*

¹ *Letters*, vol. i. p. 344: Wentworth to Laud, December 16, 1634.

² *Idem*, vol. i. p. 380: Wentworth to Laud, March 10, 1634.

of it. But now God be praised, *we have it.*' By my troth, they were his very words, and I had much ado to forbear laughing outright that understood how much he mistook even these times in this Point, which did not intend this Bishopric unto him for a Preferment, but rather as a Discipline. Yet he is a good child and kisseth the Rod; so you see it was not a correction ill bestowed upon him."

Wentworth's action "outside his Sphere" commended itself to Laud, who certainly had no wish to reinstate Ussher's Calvinistic Articles. He told Wentworth that he considered his action "a great step to piety and peace".¹ As to the King and Council, as Laud said, "absolution you need none", and, in fact, Laud declared that he had never seen Charles better satisfied. Laud had evidently behaved with discretion on this occasion;

"because we are not all one woman's children", he wrote, "I did forbear to read all your letters, lest some to whose pains you are beholden, might check at Ananias, and some other very good expressions."

A formal "letter of allowance" was moreover promised to Wentworth, who was unusually anxious to secure himself in this instance, pressing for written proof that

"I might be able to shew His Majesty at least approved of the proceedings. There is not anything hath passed since my coming to the Government I am liker to hear of than this; and therefore I would fence myself as strongly as I could against the mouse-traps, and other the smaller engines of Mr. Prynn and his associates."²

High-handed as were Wentworth's methods for dealing with mutinous clerics, all but the extremists must have realised how greatly their position was improved by the autocratic Deputy. For it was by his untiring efforts, the personal pressure he brought to bear at the Castle Cham-

¹ Laud's *Works*, vol. vii. pp. 98-9: Laud to Wentworth, January 12, 1634.

² *Letters*, vol. i. p. 381: Wentworth to Laud, March 12, 1634/35.

ber, the moral backing he afforded to timid witnesses, that Wentworth released poor parsons from their servitude to thieving bullies, and thus set a heightened standard of manners and morals in the Irish ministry. Bramhall was speaking the plain truth when he vowed that no clergyman would dare to bring up a case to the Council Board unless my Lord Deputy sat there.¹ Of these struggles Wentworth gives a vivid account in a couple of letters to Laud.

“I did the other day make the Earl of Corke disgorge himself of two vicarages that his tenant and he had held from the poor incumbent these thirty years. And as God would have it, they having reduced him to a stipend of £6 a year payd him not that neither. So as the poore man came to petition me that he might have his stipend. But I talking with him found that the Vicarages were endowed, and that my Lord himself as patron had presented. I then instantly brought it to the Council Board. My Lord would have put it off till Candlemas and the poor man willing to consent, saying he had no means to stay longer in town. But I roundly told him I would not for him nor any in the Kingdom be accessory of holding away the Patrimony of the Church. Incouraged the King’s Attorney (whom I had assigned on Council with the poor man) to do his duty against whosoever. That the King was the Protector of the Church and it would become him to be the Advocate, which duty I required publicly at his hands. I told the poor man (when my Lord of Corke refused to pay him any parte of his Pension behind, saying what reason had he to give him anything when he came hither to complain against his Lordship) that he should not trouble himself, so long as he stayed in town he should be welcome to his meat at my table, and for money I would give him £5. Told my Lord in plain termes the poor man should have justice. Heard all the Title which was as clear as the day, and when I had done appointed his Lordship the first day of the next terme to say for himself what he could at his own peril, or else would then put the Vicar in possession.

¹ *Cal. S.P. Charles I., Ireland*, p. 208: Bramhall to Laud, January 12, 1634.

"All this to his face before the whole Council. And was not this *Thorough*? I am most confident this day will gain a hundred livings to the Church thus sacrilegiously taken from it by fine, force and rapine. For now the poor man hearing of this will doe that which they durst not before, *Complaine*. And I promise you, they shall be heard with a witnes. But I beseech you where hath been the good Primate and the rest of the Bishops all this time suffering such damnable oppression of the poor Clergy? Nay, not to spare them, some of them are as bad as any layman in the Kingdome. But what will my Lord of Corke say now if I may be so bold as ask your Lordship?

"The fraternity said it was little better than Popery the setting of the Communion Table in the upper end of the Church, and causing the Prebends to come in their Habits, which they never did before my time. His Lordship may say I am a damnable Papist indeed thus to restore the possessions of the Church. But in the meantyme the poor vicar is at prayers with us every day in the Chapell here within the house. And thinks me, I assure you, one of the oddest Deputys that ever came here for using my Lord of Corke in this manner."¹

On another occasion Wentworth sent for one Dermot O'Dingle, principal agent to Cork's estate in Munster.

"This man by the favor of his Lord helped a poor man, one Atkinson, to be presented to three vicarages by the Earl in whose gift they were. Not long after, this silly creature was layd in prison for forty shillings which he ought [owed] by the practise of Dingle as I feare it will prove; being there in duress, the then Bishop of Ardfert and this Dingle plies him soe with warm clothes, or more truly and literally with hunger, cold and nakedness as to get his liberty he was content for £8 more, and, his imprisonment discharged, to let O'Dingle a lease of his three vicarages for fifteen years, reserving only forty shillings a year, the livings being well worth £50 a year. But then this Lease would not have been good for longer than the In-

¹ Fitzwilliam MSS.: Wentworth to Laud.

cumbent's life, and therefore to complete their villainy the Bishop (who had £50 in money for his share) and O'Dingle's cosen, the Earl too, and persuading his Lordship it would be the means the Bishop would pay his Lordship £50 he ought him upon an old reckoning between them, got him, being the Patron, to joyne to make good the Lease, and soe it was perfected by his Lordship, the Bishop ordinary, and the poore man incumbent. Thus hath O'Dingle received the profit of these vicarages eight years already, hath for his eight pounds and forty shillings a year gotten in that tyme £900, and is to have £350 more for the seven years that are yet to expire. *It is a fearfull thing to sitt and heare such causes as these come daily before me.*"¹

No wonder that this last cry of disgusted weariness was rung from the iron despot. Day in, day out he must have listened to the same tale of mean oppression. But he did not endure in vain, and he was justified of his prediction that when these humble folk saw the chief robber brought to book they would gather courage to "complain", and the minor banditti would then compound. For this is what ultimately came to pass, and largely accounts for the fact that a bare three years after his arrival in Ireland Wentworth was able to report that he had "bettered" the Church's patrimony by £30,000.

Unluckily for Wentworth these solid benefits were worse than valueless in the eyes of the Puritans, whose zeal was certainly not according to knowledge. The two Chambers of Convocation hailed the Deputy indeed as "the most propitious Patron of this poor Church".² But Pym retorted, "I hear nothing of Spiritual edification. They that strive not to build up Churches in a spiritual way of edification let them build all the material Churches that can be, they will do no good. God is not worshipped with walls, but he

¹ Fitzwilliam MSS.: Wentworth to Laud, March 7, 1633.

² *Letters*, vol. i. p. 383: Humble Petition of Archbishop, Bishops, and the whole Clergy assembled in Convocation, January 15, 1634.

is worshipped with hearts.”¹ And the fact that within these same hallowed walls Wentworth had reduced the scandalous chaos of the services to the “decency and form of prayer exercised” in England merely added to the indignation of the “fraternity”.

It should also be said that in the process he had seriously interfered with the comfort of high and low in the congregations. No longer was it possible for Privy Councillors, sitting “covered”, to carry on brisk conversations during mattins. No longer could apprentices and their sweethearts loll at ease on the Communion table. In fact, the Deputy insisted on the holy table being removed and fenced in altar-wise at the east end, and saw to it that Epistles and Gospels were duly read. It must have further irritated the “unco guid” to find that the imputation of papistical sympathies apparently affected him as little as inflicting boredom and discomfort on Privy Councillors and townsfolk, by depriving the one of their gossip and the other of their seats.

It was scarcely less difficult to find good incumbents than to provide them with a living wage. When bishoprics and cures fell vacant it was mainly to Laud that the worried Deputy applied for men “stored with goodness, learning and virtue”. In reply Laud promised to do his best, though he pointed out that such a combination of virtues was unusual, even in “a happier age”, adding dryly, “and the thing that is most likely to be wanting is wisdom”.²

Yet, great as was his veneration for Laud, when the Archbishop’s candidates proved unsuitable, the Deputy did not hesitate to describe them with the same candour as Jones of Killaloe, characterised by him as a “Beast”. Such, for instance, was a certain Croxton, who disembarked at Dublin, clamouring for livings and opportunities

¹ Rushworth, vol. viii. p. 107.

² Laud’s *Works*, vol. vii. p. 52: Laud to Wentworth, December 2, 1633.

for preaching. Wentworth duly appointed him to incumbencies, which—without giving notice—Croxtton forthwith let, and let badly. This did not ingratiate him with the Deputy, who, nevertheless, wishing to honour Laud's recommendation, offered him a "donative".

"It may be", writes Wentworth, "that Mr Croxtton will like this worse then if it had been a cure, for he is much set on preaching, and yet, sure, albeit he is a scholar, there is something else goes to a preacher which he yet wants, which is a selecting judgment to draw out that of his other learnings which may be apt and seasonable to be spoken in ye Pulpit, which certainly he is very defective in, for he never comes there but ye Primate is mighty scandalised, withall speaking publicly yt he preaches Arminianism, and yt it ought not to be indured. Whether this be soe or noe, by my troth, I know not, for I must confess his discourses are so Cabalistical, soe deep in ye Controversies as I could never yet conjecture what it was he would persuade me, or what it was he would be at himself." Wentworth added that he should get his £200 a year, "but I shall then be a humble suitor he may then live of himself, for I take it a little unkindly at his hands, that leaving him behind me, ye only Chaplain to attend upon my wife and family, my Wife writes me word she hath not at all seen him since my coming thence, so she hath not any soe much as to say Grace for her, which kind of neglect albeit I have passed formerly from him, yet this methinks hath something of the ill nature as well as ill Government in it."¹

Another protégé of Laud's, Bishop Bedell, was undoubtedly a worthier object of interest, though in 1633 he incurred the Deputy's wrath by setting his signature to a petition directed against the contributions assessed on the County of Cavan.

Wentworth was probably the more incensed since Bedell's unrivalled reputation made him a valuable acquisition to the Opposition. The Bishop in his defence, a manly

¹ Fitzwilliam MSS.: Wentworth to Laud, Sligo, July 20, 1635.

though involved protest, declared that he had given his adhesion to the appeal in the hope of exerting a moderating influence on the other petitioners, and that until considerable modifications had been made in the document he had twice refused his assent. He had never contemplated, he said, recusancy fines as an alternative to the aforesaid applotments. He was, in fact, too true a Christian to advocate such a course, for, as he said, "to impress the forms presently by the pecuniary mulcts would but breed a monster".¹ Nor, living as he did in close contact with grim realities in Ireland, was the holy man a pacifist. To grudge money to the Army was, he knew, to "expose with the Public Peace mine own neck to the seaines [skeans] of the Romish cut-throats". But he evidently feared that the assessments would prove a burden too heavy for his poor flock; while, like many another philanthropist, he dreaded that the tax-gatherer would leave little for the pious foundations on which he had set his heart.

The fact that Laud besought Wentworth to use Bedell "very kindly, for either I understand nothing, or else, setting my Lord Primate aside, he is more worth than half the Bishops there", probably served Bedell better than his own apologies.² Indeed, it is clear that Wentworth considered this lengthy epistle something of a rigmarole.

"Since your Lordship will have it so", he replied, "I will use Kilmore kindly, and after awhile write to him in answer to his long letter, which, indeed, I take to be very weak and not satisfactory; but it makes no matter, it shall serve the turn; men are not wise at all times, and certainly neither was he, when he set his hand to that letter."³

Having given his word, Wentworth was true to his motto of "Thorow". When the good Bishop came to pay

¹ *Letters*, vol. i. p. 148: Bedell to Wentworth, November 3, 1633.

² *Laud's Works*, vol. vii. p. 60: Laud to Wentworth, Lambeth, January 13, 1633.

³ Fitzwilliam MSS.: Wentworth to Laud, March 7, 1633/34.

his respects to the Deputy, Wentworth left his high table and the noble company, and "ran to embrace him with such reverend respects that all present did admire it". Nor was this a single occurrence. Wentworth had the true Renaissance appreciation of learning; and, since Bedell was as learned as he was holy, whenever he came to Dublin, he was warmly welcomed by the Deputy, whose courtesy cannot have gone unrewarded, since Bedell to his other virtues added charm—that rarest of qualities.

No account of Wentworth's ecclesiastical policy would be complete without some mention of his dealings with the two dissenting religious bodies in Ireland, the recusants being frankly, and the Presbyterians implicitly antagonistic. With regard to the Roman Catholics, Wentworth consistently advocated their being left alone until the country should be purged of all elements of disorder and the Church of Ireland in a condition to do her duty by them. Then, and then alone, measures might be devised to bring them to conformity. This was practically equivalent to deferring a settlement to the Day of Judgement; and though the implied menace may appear terribly intolerant to the twentieth, it was a distinct advance on the methods of the seventeenth century. Pym, for instance, who has been regarded as an apostle of liberty, declared that he "would have all Papists used like madmen".¹ Wentworth, moreover, was determined to keep faith with Romanists on both sides of the Channel. As he had hotly protested against the Bishop of Durham's attempt to go back on bargains he had made with Yorkshire recusants, so he fervently thanked Sir John Matthew for enabling him to clear himself with Mr. Conn—the papal delegate—of the imputation of double dealing with Catholics—"of being held as a Minister of Deceit and Untruths".²

¹ Wade, *Life of Pym*, p. 63.

² Fitzwilliam MSS.: Wentworth to Sir John Matthew, March 17, 1636.

If he was determined to protect Roman Catholics who were obedient subjects, he had no intention of favouring an *imperium in imperio*. He had little trouble, as a rule, with the secular priests. But the regulars, largely recruited from the younger sons of country gentlemen, did not lay aside their swashbuckling habits when they assumed the cowl, though they, too, soon learned that it would fare ill with them if they trespassed on the Deputy's benevolence.

The Scottish colony in Ulster might be described as the left wing of recusancy. To us, with our very proper horror of meddling with tender consciences, the drastic methods Wentworth eventually adopted seem inexcusable. It must, however, be again repeated that the preachers themselves regarded toleration as the most heinous of heresies—as, indeed, the country realised when they were in a position to impose their sacred League and Covenant on high and low; while their claims to exercise power equally in the domain temporal and spiritual have seldom been surpassed. Individualism run mad is an evil with which the most lenient Government is eventually bound to cope, though there is something revolting in such battles being waged over sacred rites; and it is always open to argument whether ultra-severity does not drive moderate men into the arms of extremists.

Some glimmering of this possibility seems to have dawned on Wentworth himself. For though he deplored the

“vanity and lightness of the ministers' fantastic doctrine”, he advocated at first mild means to compass uniformity. “Divers pastors, Blair, Walsh, and others”, he remarked to the Bishop of Down, “have a very scandalous usage in their congregations, where some were admitted to receive the Sacrament sitting, to the offence of those who received the same upon their knees. These disorders for the most part beginning in men of singular height and pride of mind

and ending in open disobedience of the Superior, and in rending to peeces the Peace of Holy Church. And yet withall advising all lenity and mildness be used in the means leading thereunto, as a course indeed which best becomes the performance of all Pastoral dutys. They are to understand that their former doings will not be cast up against them, promotion and preferment and time given them before they be cast out of the ministry.”¹

As time passed, however, and the ministers refused to be wooed, actually claiming a right as Scots to be free from the canons and rubrics which governed the Church of which they were the paid servants, Wentworth's views hardened.² Bramhall himself, writing at a later period, declared that he only “displaced” three clergymen in his diocese, one for “professed popery”, another for “confessed simony”, and a third for refusing to pray for the King.³ All these were reasonable cause for “destitution”. But if he did not eject Calvinistic clergymen, he certainly made Ulster a mighty uncomfortable residence for them, and was the cause of some Scottish ministers, such as the celebrated Blair, beating a retreat to their native shores. It is undeniable that the exodus of such red-hot gossellers was in the interest of peace and goodwill in Ulster. A man like Blair, who denounced Cromwell as “a greeting devil”, and a Papist in disguise, was a foe to most households of faith. Papal claims to infallibility were scarcely exceeded by the pretensions of such “presbyters”—truly “priests writ large”. Yet, though the tone of Church Councils from that of the Second Council of Chalcedon onwards has never been conspicuous for amenity, Bramhall's ratings of stiff-necked and stiff-kneed pastors are not to edification. Had he regarded an apology as necessary, he would probably have based it on the fact that if he was a shepherd of souls he was also a Government

¹ Fitzwilliam MSS.: Wentworth to Bishop of Down, 1633/34.

² O'Grady, vol. i. p. 452.

³ Bagwell, vol. i. p. 233.

official. Seen from that angle, the refusal to kneel at the reception of the sacrament was not alone a protest against "idolatrous" Popish mysteries, it was likewise the sign-manual of the Calvinist or Presbyterian—in fact of the "separatist". And in the eyes of moderate-minded citizens the separatist aimed at introducing anarchy into Church and State, as, indeed, he eventually did, until the "greeting devil" pounded him and his tribe once more into obedience to recognised authority.

CHAPTER XVII

IN the records of Wentworth's Irish rule, the Earl of Cork's name recurs with monotonous iteration. He is, in fact, the King Charles's head of the story. Before the Deputy's advent, Lord Cork, who was a proud and affectionate husband and parent, had planned and executed a portentous piece of sepulchral carpentry in honour of his second wife, her father, Sir George Fenton, and her grandfather, Sir Richard Weston, which he had erected at the east end of St. Patrick's. This mausoleum, intended eventually to receive the mortal remains of the "Great Earl" himself, had no right to occupy the place of the altar. But he was willing to pay a good round sum for the site, and at that rate the Chapter were delighted to allot him a fee-farm grant of the chancel, though such a transaction was strictly illegal.

During Cork's tenure of office, the infringement of statutes for the protection of a cathedral church was a negligible offence.¹ Wentworth's coming must, however, have cast its shadow before, since the newly appointed Bishop of Down, later one of Laud's militant Bishops, actually complained to the Archbishop of the unwarrantable intrusion of the monument before Wentworth had set foot on Irish soil. The Dean did more. In the lengthy sermons of that period, topical allusions were joyfully welcomed by the congregations. When preaching before Lord Justice Cork, who was also Lord Treasurer, Lesley

¹ O'Grady, vol. i. pp. 504-5.

chose for his text Isaiah's denunciation of Shebna, an earlier treasurer.

"Go, get thee unto this treasurer, and say, . . . What hast thou here? and whom hast thou here, that thou hast hewed thee out a sepulchre here, . . . and that graveth an habitation for himself in a rock?"¹

So runs a verse, the application of which neither the delighted audience nor the Lord Treasurer could fail to grasp. Since the prophet proceeds to denounce a "mighty captivity" on Shebna, concluding with the assurance that "from thy station, shall He (Jehovah) pull thee down", Cork, perhaps not unnaturally, took it "in horrible high dudgeon". "If your Lordship", said Wentworth to Laud, "will be pleased to turn to the place and read it, it should make you laugh"—which apparently it did.² If Cork, however, learnt that not only the Archbishop but the King had laughed "heartily" over this "good jest", it cannot have assuaged his wrath.

The outcome of this episode was that Laud, stirred up by Dean Lesley, in his turn set Wentworth in motion to investigate the matter.³ The Deputy seems first to have spoken to Cork himself, who replied that the Irish Primate was content, and that he had written to Laud, pointing out that "there never stood altar in that place in his memory".⁴ "No more, I told him", said Wentworth, "had it done in Christ Church, and yet that was the altar's place, where now it stands. But then the Commandments were removed for this tomb. And his Lordship", continued the mocking Deputy, "could never approve in such a hallowed place of such representations set up instead of the Commandments of Almighty God, that forbids to make to

¹ Isaiah xxii. verses 15-19.

² Fitzwilliam MSS.: Wentworth to Laud, March 18, 1633.

³ Laud's *Works*, vol. vii. p. 69: Laud to Wentworth, April 12, 1634.

⁴ Fitzwilliam MSS.: Laud to Wentworth, December 22, 1633.

ourselves graven images." Unfortunately, what was fun to Wentworth was, as with Æsop's frog, a mortal injury to Cork, who vowed, indeed, that he would rather die than remove the monument.

The "Great Earl" was never an adversary who could safely be despised, and now, challenged alike in his affections and pride, he rapidly mobilised a host of clergy and laity in his defence. He could count on the support of Lord Portland, since Sir Richard Weston was a relative of the "Lady Mora";¹ and Portland was easily brought to believe that Wentworth—whom he detested—had promoted the inquiry to insult him through his dead kinsman.² He consequently gave it as his verdict that the monument being erected, and some so near him in blood buried there, it should be allowed to stand. Even Laud, who was generally adamant where Holy Church was concerned, became nervous and begged Wentworth not to allow the business to occasion a breach between him and a dangerous antagonist, who had induced both Bulkeley, Archbishop of Dublin, and the Primate to intervene on his behalf.³ Ussher argued that the monument neither darkened the chancel nor displaced the altar, and that a screen to form a reredos would be an acceptable compromise. Doubtless, the Primate wished to avoid friction with the powerful Earl, and his own chapel being destitute of a Communion table, he probably regarded the whole matter as trivial. Wentworth's comments on the weakness and partiality of the prelates were caustic.

"For the two Archbishops' letters I doe wonder at the meanness of them, extremely, the Primate's the worse, and as sure as I live, if the truth could be learnt, penned by the Earl himself. I beseech your Lordship, may you not see by this that the complaint I took up in a former letter that I

¹ Lady Mora was Wentworth's and Laud's nickname for Portland.

² *Cal. S.P. Charles I., Ireland*, vol. ii. p. 43: Lord Cork to (?), February 20, 1634.

³ Laud's *Works*, vol. vii. p. 69, April 12, 1634.

found not one public Soul here amongst them, was founded upon some reason, when two Archbishops can find in their harts to write two such sinodically Epistles for the keeping up of that which, as I am a Christian, is the most scandalous and barbarous peece standing I think in any Church of Christiandom. Nay, so fare serve turns as to persuade it with such a foreign Argument as to tell us that the vanity and insolent novelties of ye Earl of Corke can reflect upon my Lord Treasurer of England, and soe beforeborne. Thus rather than faile it must be carried by party and affright, against all that durst oppose. Then againe to sett forth this Earl as a Patriarch of this Church, who is so well known already both to your Lordship and me, Lord Jesus! how suits this with the zeale and courage we read of in the Primitive tymes, how unworthy this is of Archbishops, or, if I durst speak it, of Parish Priests.”¹

With regard to the proposed screen, he continues:

“They tell you there is the like Screen in Christ Church—true. But of all things I abhor to take a Pattern for a Cathedral from thence, which is the meanliest accommodated of all I ever saw in my life, and in particular the Screen there does so abominably ill, straitens the Quire in such sort as I never desire to see the like in St Patrick’s. Sure it might prove the setting up again of St Patrick’s Purgatory, for the pulling down whereof the Earl valews himself so highly.

“They tell you they cannot see what offence is to be taken at that monument, or if you please at that excellent beauty or ornament of the Church. But never tell you it is so full in view that if I desire to do Reverence to God, before his Altar (which indeed I see few of them do) I cannot yet frame myself to it then, lest men might think the King’s Deputy were crouching to a Dr. Weston, to a Jeffray Fenton, to an Earl of Cork and his Lady, or if you will to a Kilmanikie, his second son, the veriest shark they say in a kingdom, or to those Sea Nymphs his daughters, coronetts upon their heads, their haire dishevelled, down upon

¹ Fitzwilliam MSS.: Wentworth to Laud.

their shoulders. Nay, which is worse, I protest to God it offends me extremely, when I am to say my prayers to have such a landskipp in my Eye, and if my Father's monument stood so in my private Chapell down it should go."

Wentworth was not mollified by hearing that Cork attributed his attitude to a hitch, which happened to occur at this moment, with regard to Lord Dungarvan and Mistress Clifford's marriage settlements.

"Faith", he wrote, "his pott Boyles over there, as Kildare truly answered his Lordship (*i.e.* Cork) boasting that he was a better Gentleman born than any Geraldine."¹

It must not be imagined that it was merely his artistic sense which made Wentworth desire the removal of a cumbersome monument. Apart also from his ecclesiastical standards, he was convinced that, if the Earl got the better of the dispute, public opinion would be affected, and that "it will draine much from the current that begins to run in so full streams for restoring the desolate and despised Churches and Churchmen of this Kingdom". He therefore begged the King to appoint a Commission, including both Archbishops, to adjudicate on the vexed subject. Since they had championed Cork it might seem, at first sight, that this would be damning his own case. But Wentworth knew how to manipulate more important clerics than "Ananias of Limerick".

"I have", he said, "in a very respective and faithful manner (as in good faith, the goodness, piety and learning of the man merit) represented unto him (Ussher) how far below it is a Person of his estimation in the Church to suffer himself to be wrought upon meanly to serve turns."

And the homily was well received, for the Archbishop "confessed his error".

Then having unburdened himself of his exhortation,

¹ Fitzwilliam MSS.: Wentworth to Laud, March 18, 1633/34.

the lecturer indulges himself in one of those jests which punctuate his correspondence with Laud.

"The Earl hath made for him already three tombes, this here, one at Youghal, and one in England; how think you if the Tombmakers at Christchurch should inform against him for taking upon him their trade without serving his apprenticeship? It were well Mr Attorney's opinion were taken whether their action would lie."

Laud's misgivings notwithstanding, on this occasion Wentworth triumphed all along the line. The King refused Dungarvan's petition for a signet letter in favour of the mausoleum, and Wentworth obtained his Commission. Under his vigilant eye, two Archbishops, four Bishops, two Deans, and Chapter inspected Cork's funeral pile, and exhaustively examined witnesses as to the original situation of the altar. Wentworth boasted that he had

"made them all so ashamed that the Earl desires he may have leave to pull it down, without reporting further into England; so as I am content, if the miracle be done, though Mahomet do it, and there is an end of the Tomb before it come to be intombed indeed."¹

There was an "end of the Tomb" where it should never have been erected. But the bitterness of the episode aroused in Cork was enduring. In March 1635 Wentworth gleefully recounted the last act of the tragi-comedy. By that time Mistress Clifford had become Lady Dungarvan, and had given a grandson and heir to the "Great Earl", a child to whom the Lord Deputy stood sponsor. It was to this babe that Wentworth referred when he wrote to Laud:

"The Earl of Cork's tomb is now quite removed; how he means to dispose it, I know not; but up it is put in Boxes, as if it were Marchpanes and Banquetting stuffs, going down to the christening of my young master."²

¹ *Letters*, vol. i. p. 298: Wentworth to Laud, August 23, 1634.

² *Idem*, vol. i. p. 379: Wentworth to Laud, March 10, 1634/35, Dublin.

The monument's journey was, however, shorter than Wentworth anticipated. It did not get further than the west end of St. Patrick's, where it still confronts the wondering spectator. Laud, who was addicted to puns, closed the long tale with the remark that "it was a disproportion so massy a tomb should stand upon Cork".¹

This storm in a teacup, as it may appear, had nevertheless important consequences. Wentworth's victory carried the lesson that the greatest in the land could not stand out against the Deputy's decisions, when countersigned by the Sovereign. The next encounter between the two men resulted in heavier damage to Cork, while as a test case it spread dismay in the ranks of those described by Laud as "Church cormorants".

It will be remembered that amongst his church booty, close on thirty years before, Cork had contrived to possess himself of the College of the Blessed Virgin of Youghal, a foundation due to the piety of the fifteenth-century Earl of Desmond, which, besides the usual ecclesiastical objects, provided for various secular needs.² A Warden, eight Fellows, and eight choristers drew £700 a year from its revenues, and its advowsons represented a good £800 per annum. No part of these could be devised and leased without the Corporation's consent under the Chapter's seal.

Family feeling was a marked characteristic of the Great Earl. Thanks to his patronage, two of his cousins had been advanced to the Episcopate. Richard Boyle, Bishop of Cork, was Warden; Michael Boyle, Bishop of Waterford and Lismore, was a Fellow of the College. Under the former's sway the College was becoming derelict, since he took good care not to fill the vacant stalls, so that when the

¹ Laud's *Works*, vol. vii. p. 174: Laud to Wentworth, October 4, 1635.

² *Cal. S.P. Charles I., Ireland*, vol. ii. pp. 49-50, May 3, 1634: Report on College of Youghal.

Fellows all died he might pass the property of the College to the Earl of Cork. The process was, however, leisurely; and, on the pretext of installing a new Fellow, Richard Boyle obtained from the senior surviving Fellow the seal and charter, went off with them to Dublin, and there, without the knowledge or consent of the Fellows, conveyed the lands and advowsons to Cork against the beggarly annual sum of twenty marks. At the same time he handed over the seal and charter to his noble cousin.

So matters continued for twenty years. One Fellow after another died off, and the Earl drew the income, comfortable in the belief that the day was in sight when no single Fellow would be left to challenge his possession of the College. Then, suddenly, a halt was called. It was the old story of knaves falling out. Cork and his jackal had a difference. With the support of the Bishop of Lismore, now the sole surviving Fellow, the Warden elected two new Fellows. Cork was alarmed. He met the Chapter and offered a rental of £86 contingent on their giving him their bond for a new lease, and likewise—and this formed the gravamen of the subsequent charge against him—on their taking an oath that so long as the £86 was punctually paid, they would not question the Earl's claims.¹

This oath was just too clever, since the primary conceptions of English justice forbid a citizen to divest himself of those civil rights which are his birthright. Consequently, when Cork attempted to circumvent the Fellows of Youghal after this fashion, he brought himself within reach of the long arm of the law. Shrewd and well served though he was, he seems to have had no inkling of the risks he ran. With regard to the livings, he pursued his usual policy. To some he simply did not appoint. A single curate became the nominal incumbent of several other widely scattered cures, which, it need hardly be said,

¹ O'Grady, vol. i. pp. 510-11.

he held at a wretched pittance. Thus out of Carrigaline, which brought in £100, the "Great Earl" paid the rector £2 annually.

As it happened, the Bishop of Waterford and Lismore valued his own revenues no less than did his noble cousin. Indeed, it seems a singular lapse in the shrewdness of the latter to have failed to guard against this chink in his armour. When the Bishop discovered that his predecessors had "fraudulently" made away property appertaining to the see of Lismore worth £700 per annum to Lord Cork, and that, with the exception of the chancel, his cathedral church was in ruins because the Earl held its "economy", he wrote to Laud warning him that Cork was "about to swallow up Youghal" and its endowments. It was a pathetic appeal to Laud to remember their undergraduate days, and "now that you are so great" to induce the King and Deputy to rescue his temporalities.¹ Nor was it surprising that the Prelate's needs overcame his family feelings, since from the two sees, worth altogether £1600 per annum, he drew a bare £50. "This and £100 *in commendam* is all I possess", wrote the unfortunate Bishop. He did not exaggerate his parlous plight, for the proof of the extent of the Earl's ecclesiastical pillage can be read in the list of benefices already given, which he fleeced.

Even Mr. Mahaffy, probably Strafford's most hostile critic, acknowledges that

"if the accounts of the conveying away of the College and its estates are trustworthy, they form one of the most astounding records of dishonesty which have come down from a very dishonest period".²

Evidently, Wentworth had to bestir himself if Youghal was not to be "swallowed up" by Cork. Nevertheless

¹ *Cal. S.P. Charles I., Ireland*, vol. ii. p. 45: Bishop of Waterford and Lismore to Archbishop of Canterbury.

² *Idem*, vol. ii. preface, p. xix.

the Deputy undertook the task with marked reluctance. Though he had warned Clifford of his misgivings as to Youghal forming a part of his daughter's settlement,

"I must confess", he told Laud, "I never undertook a business more against my own private affections in all my life. . . . I laid myself open to the calumny of tongues, not only as a forsaker but a prosecutor too of my nearest friends. . . . I never had so hard a part to play in all my Life, but neither alliance nor friendship or other thing . . . shall be ever able to separate me from the service of God or my master."¹

He made it quite clear to Laud, however, that he would not meddle with such dangerous stuff unless he could count on his royal master's support. The Archbishop had never minimised the dangers the "shrewd wench"—his cryptic name for Wentworth—would run in tilting at the most powerful capitalist in Ireland. Yet he was aware that "if she lay it so home upon the Earl of Cork as to multiply into £26,000 at least, she is a great arithmetician".² The King's answer to Wentworth's "most pressing passage" was, however, reassuring, for Charles vowed that "if you follow it with an irreprehensible honour and justice (they are your own words) you may go on and be sure no favour nor underhand giving shall take him out of the hand of justice". These were brave words. Nevertheless if Laud bade Wentworth "go thorough", he was constrained to add: "Yet I must tell you money and friends will go far."

The Archbishop's forecast was correct. The charges against Cork, on which the writ to appear before the Castle Chamber was grounded, were heavy. He was accused not alone of having caused an unlawful oath to be administered, and of fraudulent proceedings over the

¹ *Letters*, vol. i. p. 459: Wentworth to Laud, Portumna, August 26, 1635.

² Laud's *Works*, vol. vii. p. 77: Laud to Wentworth, June 23, 1634.

so-called lease of the College, but of having committed forgery. On the other hand, at every step, Wentworth was challenged by the double influence of "money and friends".

To pursue the intricacies of this much-debated case would exhaust the most patient reader. Suffice it to say that the permission to proceed had hardly been penned by the King's secretaries, when close on its heels arrived a royal signet suggesting that Cork should cross to England to plead his case before the Sovereign and Privy Council—who, it should be noted, had endorsed Wentworth's policy. Against this proposal the Deputy fought his hardest.

"It will be a Blemish upon the Administration of His Majesty's Justice in this Kingdom", he cried, "and raise an overweening in Persons of Power, as if our authority were set rather over the Poor, than over them, a Belief they are upon all occasions ready to flatter themselves into, and hath hitherto been a great Stop and Disturbance to the free and steady course of justice on this Side."¹

Wentworth proposed that if Cork was unable to prove the Warden and Fellows' consent to the grant, the dispute should be decided by "open and publick justice". In the contrary case, it should be submitted "to His Majesty's goodness"² The forgery charge was withdrawn. But Cork's own lawyers told him that there was no getting over the illegal oath he had imposed on the College, and all his friends and relatives, including Lord Dungarvan, urged him to offer terms that Wentworth would be likely to accept. However much in his diary he appealed to God, and affirmed the rectitude of his own conscience, the truth is that if the case had been carried to Court the "Great Earl" would have been shamed out of official life. The Deputy had no wish for such an outcome, which would have had a very bad effect in Ireland. And, finally, at the eleventh

¹ *Letters*, vol. i. pp. 459-60: Wentworth to Laud, Portumna, August 26, 1635.

² O'Grady, vol. i. p. 516.

hour Cork capitulated, and agreed to pay £15,000 in three yearly instalments. For thirty years he had enjoyed the College's revenues, and this operation consequently mulcted him of half of his profits; or, rather, as Mr. O'Grady points out, £10,000 stood for the "least fine" the King would accept, while the extra £5000 was the market value of the College, which, at that price, he was allowed to retain instead of being forced to surrender it.¹ This compromise must have been a relief to Wentworth, since it obviated the necessity of scrapping Lady Dungarvan's marriage settlement.²

The whole business terminated on a note of quasi-comedy, or, indeed, boisterous farce. To obtain the Youghal lands as arranged, Cork had to petition the King, and the petition, which Wentworth had promised to support, could not be "moved" until signed by Cork. Wentworth was about to sail for England, the wind was favourable, and his "gentleman Usher" came to beseech him to hurry, since wind and tide would not wait even for the Lord Deputy. The Earl had not, however, read this petition, and when in slow business-like fashion he proceeded to scan the document, which, it appears, he had not realised until then, Wentworth took it out of his hands and bade Sir George Radcliffe, who was better acquainted with its contents, read it aloud. This Radcliffe did at such a pace as thoroughly to alarm Cork, who saw a fresh plot against his peace of mind. The trumpet had already sounded to horse for the escort to accompany Wentworth to the quay, he himself was standing "with one legg within the study doore and the other without", and willy-nilly the unfortunate petitioner had to put his signature to a paper which he had not had time to consider. The alternative was to offend the Deputy, who reiterated that "since I had put myself in his

¹ O'Grady, vol. i. pp. 517-18.

² Laud's *Works*, vol. vii. p. 281: Laud to Wentworth, October 4, 1635.

hands I must trust him".¹ The two men compromised on the promise of a "true copy" in Wentworth's own hand, the writing was "clapped into his Cabinett" and they parted.

"But from that day to this", wrote the unhappy Cork, "I could never see that, nor the Copy of it, neither can I remember the contents of it, it was so postingly read over unto me; which hath ever since much disquieted me."

¹ *Lismore Papers*, Series II., vol. iii. p. 258.

CHAPTER XVIII

WENTWORTH having initiated reform within and without the Church, and demonstrated by his controversies with Cork that the greatest must bow to his ruling, could now concentrate on his next campaign—the reform of those districts and their inhabitants which, in the jargon of the day, were described as “uncivil”.

To the English statesman of that date, Plantations appeared the only method by which the Irish could be approximated to the standards of order and industry obtaining in England. A system which, though graciously abandoning three-fourths of his lands to the owner, confiscated one-fourth, may appear perilously akin to the “nationalisation” dear to Socialist theorists, and is a proof, if such were needed, of the close relation of despotism and democracy. But that there was need of reform cannot be gainsaid. The pity was that the strong hand of an able autocrat had not intervened at a far earlier period. As a matter of fact, the condition of Ireland when Wentworth landed at Dublin was certainly not in advance on that of England 150 years earlier. In England, moreover, the Wars of the Roses had merely marked an interlude in the steady upbuilding of the Commonwealth. When Henry VII. picked the Crown out of a bush he had in a measure to re-educate the nation into orderliness. But he had the backing of an overwhelming public opinion. Memories of a time when the King’s writ ran unchallenged

throughout the length and breadth of the land still survived, giving fair promise of such another happy state of affairs if King and subjects acted in unison. Yeoman, freeholder, squire, and burgess appreciated that fact, and realised that only under the King's peace could they till the earth, weave, trade, and undisturbed go upon their lawful occasions. Consequently, without the aid of a standing army, the Sovereign evolved order out of anarchy, and the realm attained an unexampled prosperity.

On the other hand, Wentworth's task was unlightened by the advantages the first Tudor had enjoyed. A mythical golden age offers little solid reality in the way of precedents, and Ireland had known none other. It was not until Tyrone's submission in 1603 that a peace of sheer exhaustion put an end to the perennial fightings. For centuries previously, civil war, punctuated by famine, had been the normal condition of the Isle of Saints. Lords and chiefs, wolf-like, devoured each other, and were raided in turn by the feeble Government of the Pale. Then came the counter-Reformation and the Jesuits. The home Government could no longer suffer Ireland to be a "back-door" for the invaders, and at last took active steps to reconquer the entire country. The people who of all others had given the most half-hearted allegiance to the vicar of Christ found in the bond of their religion the common factor that was ultimately to weld them into a nation. They could at last unfurl an honourable flag under which to march against the foreign foe. It is true that after James's accession Ireland was the country in all Christendom where, despite statutes and the occasional flurry of Protestant Lord Justices, religious toleration was an actual fact. But to dub the intruder a heretic was not only consolatory, it enabled the faithful to execrate his well-meaning, if tactless, reforms.

Three years after Tyrone's submission, the flight of the

Earls, according to the lawyers, had escheated the province of Ulster to King James. The Plantation followed, with the unhappy results already described. On the other hand, it is only fair to remember that the long leases then granted instead of tenancies at will, and the abolition of "exactions", the uncertain servile dues imposed by great lords and chieftains, were real benefits. The advent of the "undertaker" had at least this advantage, that it frequently brought regular employment for the labourer who had previously starved on his tribal strip of land, burdened by dues of "coigne and livery", "horse meat and man's meat at the lord's pleasure". Nor were his last hours embittered by the knowledge that no sooner was the breath out of his body than his chieftain could claim every second cow of the herd from his widow. Neither was it only the "meaner sort" who gained by the revolution Plantations effected. With capital forthcoming to develop property, its value rose and thus proved an offset to the confiscated fourth. The same cause led to the creation of boroughs to which the natives drifted, where they acquired the steady crafts and industries so greatly needed. It was Cork's great merit that he had been a foremost promoter of such civilising centres in the south of Ireland.

These reasons were bound to appeal to Wentworth, ever striving to lift a poverty-stricken and backward race on to higher levels of existence, or, as he put it, "to plant Civility, Religion, and Industry" amongst the natives.¹ The further gains of netting large sums for the empty Exchequer, and of bringing "great ones" into subordination to the Sovereign, were likewise no small recommendations to the Deputy. Yet, as Mr. Gardiner has observed, "at the bottom, his life's work was contention not so much for the Royal authority as for the supremacy of intellect".²

¹ *Letters*, vol. i. p. 342: Wentworth to King, Dublin, December 15, 1634.

² Gardiner, vol. viii. p. 65.

The first Plantation Wentworth strove to effect was that of Ormond. Here, by the surrender of the necessary documents, the future Duke of Ormond enabled him to prove the King's title to a large tract. Security of title and a covenanted system of holdings, instead of insecurity and perpetual strife and litigation with the wild tenantry who inhabited the region of Idough, were the considerations that induced Ormond to assist Wentworth. Ormond was, moreover, a Protestant, and, as Wentworth told Charles, Protestants were as much in favour of Plantations as Roman Catholics were the reverse. This was probably less from missionary zeal than from a material point of view. Protestants were attracted to Plantations by the prospect of improving holdings, which afforded a higher return for the capital invested than could be secured in England. In making their profit they were improving their landlord's property. As tenants, in the long run, they were more remunerative than the native, who insisted on ploughing—if he ploughed at all—by the tail, and preferred grazing to cultivation. And it must be remembered that to bring a larger acreage under the plough was the chief ambition of successive Deputies. Again, when in the position of landlords, Protestants were more inclined to be progressive than their Romish contemporaries, who clung to the ancient customs.

But though Ormond, bred in England and possessing both a natural and acquired respect for law and order, and a gift for intelligent handling of men and lands, was ready to further the Plantation, it was not easily achieved. The curse of the age in that country was the pack of agents who made a living by hunting out flaws in legal titles of hoary antiquity. If a tract of country, wild in the seventeenth, and, of course, entirely unsurveyed in the thirteenth or fourteenth century, was surmised to be the dowry of some medieval heiress, agents and lawyers would swoop down

on the wretched owner like a cloud of vultures. The Defective Titles Commission would in time remedy this evil, but it was a lengthy process, and meanwhile this was the fate that overtook Ormond's debatable territory of Idough. Wentworth's bargain with Ormond was scarcely concluded, and not yet registered, when Lord Arundel, who was descended from two of Strongbow's daughters, claimed Idough as part of his ancestresses' heritage. Charles, as usual, yielded to the petition of the courtier on the spot, and bestowed a signet letter on the Earl Marshal, addressed to Wentworth, to assist his suit. A weaker man, or one less just than Wentworth, would have hesitated to oppose so powerful a magnate, with whom, up till then, he had lived on friendly terms. Not so Wentworth. He would not even allege, as he might well have done, that the King, on having the matter explained to him, had withdrawn his recommendation of Arundel's petition. It was against his conception of ministerial responsibility to "ease himself" at the Sovereign's expense. He took the onus of refusal once more on his own shoulders, and in writing to Arundel he did not mince matters, though he was anxious to prove to a man he had considered his friend that he had done his best to serve him in the allotment of "parcels" of land. A portion of Ormond's domain, Fort Moland, which had once belonged to the Dukes of Norfolk, had been reserved for Charles to bestow on Portland, and, since he was dead, Wentworth proposed to transfer this land to Arundel. With regard to Idough the Deputy was, however, adamant. To begin with, it was no part of the lands to which Arundel was heir, and to give way to the signet letter was impossible, he told the Earl Marshal, "without a foul and main breach as well of publick as private faith". It was only thanks to Ormond's help that the King's title had been found, and it would be imputed to him "as a very foul transgression should I first lead them [landowners]

on by promises to give up their weapons and then, at after, convey it away quite from them."¹

As to the agents Arundel employed, he was emphatic.

"Jones and Kendal, the former a person infamous; the latter not of sound repute; and both of them in understanding no way fitted for this employment; yet such as you may be assured, five marks handsomely conveyed from the Parties concerned into their Pockets, shall still any Pretences intrusted with for your Lordship."

Then warming as he proceeds, he cannot forbear telling Arundel the effect his employment of such agents must make on the public.

"Next I judge it no ways, under Favour, comely for your Lordship to permit such a couple of Beagles to hunt at random all over the Province of Leinster, searching and prying for Extremities upon legal Advantages, turning the ancient Owners upon valuable and good considerations, no way privy to the supposed Frauds, forth of their estates, separating the Subjects from the promised and princely Protection and Grace of His Majesty, especially when the employment alone of such Persons as these were (believe me) sufficient to scandal any Business how good soever."

As a matter of fact, it is clear in this letter that, although Wentworth wished to avoid a direct attack on the Earl Marshal, Jones and Kendal were Arundel's whipping boys, and Arundel was too shrewd not to perceive the trend of the Deputy's homily. Consequently he became one of Wentworth's bitterest enemies, and as Lord High Steward at the trial was able to avenge his fancied wrongs on Strafford.

Though Wentworth had kept Arundel out of Idough, he could not prevent him and his "Beagles" from stirring up strife among the wild inhabitants. Another Butler, Ormond's envious kinsman, Lord Mountgarret, who also

¹ *Letters*, vol. ii. pp. 29-30: Wentworth to Earl Marshal, August 26, 1636.

had land in that region, had been ordered by the Defective Titles Commission to pay a fine and to exchange certain of his holdings with Ormond. It was on such terms that "compositions" were frequently arranged. In this instance Christopher Wandesford was the "undertaker", who would thereby gain a compact allotment, some holdings having been "passed" to him, while he had bought others at fair market prices. This did not, however, suit Mountgarret, who openly defied the sentence of the Court. The "Beagles" found him tinder to their flame, and between them and a family of squatters, Brennan by name, who had failed to prove their titles, the methods of latter-day land leagues and land campaigns were anticipated on Wandesford's Castle Comer estate. Relying on Arundel's protection, the Brennans felt they were at liberty to burn houses at their own sweet will. Wandesford vainly attempted to win them over by fair means rather than "to foment their obstinacy by any violent courses". But eventually a posse of soldiers had to be despatched to Castle Comer to protect the property—an action which formed one of the accusations against Strafford.¹

The great province of Connaught was the main objective of Wentworth's Plantation schemes. A county of vast grazing grounds, supporting large flocks of sheep, Galway was its mercantile centre, the clearing-house for the wool products and exports. It was a stronghold of priests and friars, while the population as a whole had not outgrown the mixed tribal and feudal system. In all but name the Bourke chieftains, the semi-anglicised De Burghs, Earls of St. Albans and Clanricarde, were the sovereign princes of a country which, outside the walls of Galway, remained singularly wild and undeveloped. Wentworth fully realised the difficulties awaiting him before he could "line" that huge region with industrious settlers, and make the King

¹ Ormond MSS., N.S. i. p. 32: Wandesford to Ormond, Dublin, June 18, 1636.

in fact as well as in name its Lord Paramount. He determined consequently to begin operations on the outposts, the counties of Roscommon, Sligo, and Mayo. He himself has left an account of the manner in which he carried Roscommon. Hitherto, on these occasions, Crown counsel had alone been heard. Wentworth now decreed that every freeholder should come and plead his rights. So certain was he of the righteousness of his case that, as Mr. Gardiner has observed, he insisted that the jury empanelled should consist of "Gentlemen of the best estates and understanding", men who could stand up for their own opinions.¹

"My reason was", he told Coke, "that this being a leading case for the whole Province, it would set a great value in their estimation upon the goodness of the King's title being found by Persons of their Qualities, and as much concerned in their own particulars as others."²

Nor did he forget that if they should "prevaricate" (for in his opinion only bad faith could make them throw doubt on the royal title) they could more easily "answer the King in a good round fine in the Castle Chamber", for it must be confessed that Wentworth never lost sight of the financial aspect of affairs.

On his arrival at Boyle, Wentworth's first step was to send for half a dozen of the leading gentlemen, and in the presence of the Commissioners to inform them that the business in hand was to find a clear and undoubted title in the Crown to Connaught, beginning with Roscommon. For the first time in such "inquisitions", counsel was to be heard for the defendants; and further, he was ready to consider and to return "a fair and equal answer" to any inquiries they chose to make, "so as to afford His Majesty's good People all respect and Freedom in the setting forth and defense of their several rights and claims. With this",

¹ O'Grady, vol. ii. pp. 764-5; Gardiner, vol. viii. p. 61.

² *Letters*, vol. i. p. 442: Wentworth to Coke, Boyle Abbey, July 24, 1635.

adds Wentworth, "I left them marvellous much satisfied; for a few good words please them more than you can imagine."

The gentry of Roscommon would have been strangely unlike the majority of human beings if they had been ready to vote away a proportion of their lands for a few good words. The reasons that brought them to acquiesce were far other. First and foremost was the awe the Deputy inspired, next the very natural desire to secure titles for their properties which it should be beyond the power and ingenuity of any "beagles" to question. Ex-Speaker Catlin argued the case for the Crown, and, according to Wentworth, after the defendants' pleadings had been "patiently and quietly heard at large, did so wipe them all away" that the Crown's title was amply proved.

To arrive at this conclusion required an exploration of past history which fills the modern reader with amazement rather than edification, especially when we remember that although feudal conceptions had been superimposed on a tribal world, the code and customs of that primitive society were the code and the customs which still governed the majority of the inhabitants of Connaught.

According to the lawyers of that era, by John's conquest of Ireland, his son, Henry III., had become the owner of Connaught, which, in his turn, he made over to Richard de Burgh. This meant that the first item to be proved was the King's patent delivered to the ancestral De Burgh; secondly, the descent of Charles I. through Edward IV. from Lionel, Duke of Clarence, and the heiress of the De Burghs; and finally, the so-called "Acts of Resumption" by Henry VIII.¹ By this series of proofs, the King, according to Serjeant Catelin, was the heir to all lands not granted away by his De Burgh ancestors or Henry VIII.

Wentworth's exposition of the case can have left the jury

¹ O'Grady, vol. ii. p. 765.

in no doubt as to the verdict he expected them to return on the "undoubted" royal title. He told them that

"the first movers of His Majesty to look into this, his undoubted Title, were the Princely Desires he hath to effect them a civil and rich People, which cannot by any so sure and ready means be attained as by a Plantation, which therefore in his great wisdom he had resolved, yet that it should be so done as not to take anything from them which was justly theirs, but in Truth to bestow amongst them a good Part of that which was his own."

The King had no intention to question any man's patent formerly granted and valid in law. "His great Seal was his publick faith and should be kept sacred in all things." Otherwise his "Right" was so plain that it did not require their confirmation. On an information of intrusion, and on the first motion of the Attorney-General, he could not have been denied possession by the ordinary proceeding of the Court of Exchequer. But His Majesty, though indifferent whether they found for him or no, was "graciously pleased they should as well have a part with him in the Honour as in the Profit of so glorious and excellent a work for the Commonwealth", and he, Wentworth, in his desire for their prosperity, besought them not to "appear obstinate against so manifest a Truth" or to let slip the "means to weave themselves into the Royal thoughts" by a "cheerful acknowledgement" of Charles's right. He closed with a hint that if they were regardless of their own good and wished to do that which "was simply best for His Majesty", they had better "roughly and pertinaciously" deny the King's title. "And there", adds Wentworth, "I left them to 'chant together' (as they call it) over the evidence." After being informed that willy-nilly the title would be found, it is small wonder that the gentlemen of Roscommon meekly submitted.

The points for which they pleaded were willingly con-

ceded by Wentworth. He had already given his word—which, indeed, he could scarcely have withheld—that no water-tight patent should be questioned. Since there were few charters to be found in Irish muniment rooms which answered to this description, it was a cheap favour. He also willingly agreed to except all patents for Abbey lands, whether good in law or not, since Henry VIII.'s resumption of them at the Dissolution of the Monasteries was proof positive that they were passed or confirmed to their holders by the Sovereign's express will. And all Church property was confirmed to its ecclesiastical proprietors. Of his own accord, Wentworth, judging that it was "most safe and comely to please the People in the Circumstances and outwards of things", moreover begged Coke to arrange for the bargain to be engrossed in an Act of State and promptly returned to Ireland.

Sligo and Mayo followed Roscommon's example; and Wentworth then travelled to Portumna, where the stage was set for finding the King's title to Galway. The Earls of Clanricarde, the suzerains of County Galway, were loyal servants of the Crown. The old Earl, who died in England in 1635, had stood by Elizabeth and James in the Civil Wars. His son was to prove Ormond's right hand in the terrible years ahead. Their power in the West was tremendous, and can only be compared to that of the Argylls in Scotland. Practically, Lord Clanricarde was the head of his sept—for such were the Bourkes—while he was also the owner of one-third and the feudal lord of two-thirds of the county of Galway.¹ A devout Roman Catholic, the priests and friars kept the Irishry loyal to the anglicised Earl of St. Albans and Clanricarde. No sooner was the Crown's claim submitted to the jury than almost all Clanricarde's kinsmen and dependents, following the lead of one Donellan, the Earl's steward, countered it with the

¹ O'Grady, vol. ii. p. 766.

retort that Connaught had not been conquered, but had made terms with Henry II., who was not the owner of the lands for which he received rent.¹ They added that no proof was forthcoming of its possession by Lionel, Duke of Clarence; and when further called on to declare in whom, if not in the King, the freehold was vested, they refused to answer.

As a matter of fact, the title under which the De Burghs held for two hundred years was that given by Henry III.² Nor was the jury justified in the plea that Henry VIII.'s "Act of Resumption" only mentioned tenures and not lands; while the grants made by Elizabeth had certainly been vitiated by the non-performance of the governing conditions. Nevertheless, as Mr. Bagwell remarks, a long time had elapsed since Sir Henry Sidney and Perrot had fixed the "cess", or rent, in those districts; and though the chiefs and gentry had often subsequently broken their compositions by "flying out" in overt rebellion, it was hard to inflict confiscation after a generation of peace.³

Only two jurymen eventually cast their votes for the Crown. These men, according to Wentworth, were the two who were "least" related to Clanricarde. Richard Bourke, the Earl's nephew, who plucked a hesitating juror by the sleeve to remind him of his duty to his chief, was promptly fined £500 for contempt of Court—a punishment the King would gladly have increased. Lord Clanmorris, another nephew of Clanricarde's, also incurred Wentworth's wrath as having "appeared openly before us as the Gracious Lord to countenance the Opposition of the County".⁴ He seems, however, to have come off without much damage. It was on the Sheriff, Darcy, and the jury that the thunder-

¹ Carte, *Life of the Duke of Ormonde*, vol. i. p. 164.

² O'Grady, vol. ii. p. 767.

³ Bagwell, vol. i. p. 251.

⁴ *Letters*, vol. i. p. 452: Wentworth and Commissioners to Coke, August 25, 1635.

bolts descended. Darcy was fined £1000 for "packing" the jury—as indeed he had probably done—and was forthwith committed to prison, where he died. The jury were bound over to appear at the Castle Chamber, where they were sentenced to pay £4000 apiece and to crave pardon on their knees. Finally, Wentworth published a Proclamation in which he announced that, with the exception of the jurors' lands, and "all that shall not lay hold on His Majesty's Grace" offered them by the Proclamation, not a fourth but a half of each landowner's property in Galway "should be seized for His Majesty".¹ By the Exchequer proceeding, which he had held *in terrorem* over the more docile jurymen of Roscommon, Wentworth could, he declared, escheat the whole of Connaught to the King. This, said Wentworth, was to

"break the combination and to make all the natives inexcusable if they did not accept the Grace thereby offered, and to open the passage of His Majesty's Justice more plain and honourable, by this means taking from them all the Pretence they might make that the Fault was only the Jury's, and so the Punishment properly applicable to them and not to the County, who might allege themselves to be altogether innocent therein."²

Eventually, in the winter of 1637, "after serious debate", the final lines of settlement were arranged.³ All lands in Connaught held by patent were of two sorts, the one of lands and hereditaments held to be the ancient inheritance of the Crown; the other of Abbey lands which came to the Crown by the dissolution of the Abbeys.

According to the Plantation Commissioners, and indeed, most probably, considering all the circumstances, the patents for the former were frequently obtained by

¹ *Letters*, vol. i. p. 453.

² *Idem*, vol. i. p. 451.

³ *Idem*, vol. ii. p. 139: Deputy and Commissioners of Plantation to Secretary Coke, November 30, 1637.

frauds and pretended discoveries of escheated lands. But in Wentworth's opinion, though it might be "just to vindicate the rights of the Crown against such frauds. . .", which made many void, yet it was determined not to take more than a fourth part. And it must be understood that the three-fourths would be more valuable than the whole originally, "as well in regard of the benefit they shall have by the Plantation" as of the security of the settlement.

Abbey lands came under another category, since Henry VIII. had meant to grant these lands escheated to him. Therefore they were not to be meddled with for the present, only exchanges, "where necessity requires it", might be effected for plantation purposes. When all the work of distribution was finished, they too, however, would be drawn into the general improvement measures.

It is interesting to note that, sweeping as were Wentworth's demands on behalf of the Crown, they cannot compare with the confiscations perpetrated in Munster after Desmond's attainder, or in Ulster after the flight of the Earls. Wentworth believed that if the royal title was found in Mayo, Roscommon, Sligo, Clare, Limerick, Tipperary, and Galway, it should entitle the King to hold 120,000 acres in demesne.¹ This meant a sixth of the land reserved in Ulster, and two-thirds of that reserved in Munster. Wentworth's schemes were far better laid than any previously planned, and if they could have been carried out it is possible that they might have conduced—eventually—rather to good than to evil.² He was careful to exempt all improvements in building and husbandry, all purchases of land since the King's accession; while the head rent imposed of 2½d. per acre was considerably less than that of the average proprietor. Moreover, he restricted allotments to 1000 acres, a holding which would not exceed the capacity of the average owner to develop. And

¹ O'Grady, vol. ii. p. 766.

² *Idem*, vol. ii. p. 768.

above all, he was set on securing tenants who would improve the land and fulfil their covenants. He calculated that the cost of breaking up the soil was the equivalent of ten years' purchase, the average price in Ireland standing at fourteen years' purchase.¹ Further, the planters were to hold themselves in readiness to reinforce the local garrisons, and to provide arms and ammunition for 6000 men.

The chief difficulty was to find and to settle the right type of resident planter. Wentworth was resolved that his efforts—for he honestly regarded them as such—for raising the level of civilisation and cultivation should not be frustrated by the immigration of out-of-elbows courtiers, and courtiers' clients. To guard against this danger he was always ready—too ready—to “take the negative off” the King; and it is certain that the hatred of the men he disoblged, owing to his sense of rectitude, had no small part in his undoing.

He was, in fact, firmly resolved that Ireland should not be the milch cow of that “Nation of people, or rather vermin which are ever to be found at the Court of Great Princes”.² The King's revenue was to be increased. But that increase was to benefit Ireland.

Taking all these matters into consideration, it may be asked why the Galway Plantation raised a far greater storm of protest on both sides of the Channel than the badly planned and worse executed Ulster Plantation. The answer probably is that the cause of this denunciation is largely to be found in the fact that it was enforced after a generation of peace. The legal theories of that age do not square with our ideals of justice. We must, however, remember that they were not peculiar to one side of the quarrel. What does outrage our sense of equity is that after inviting counsel to plead the case against the Crown, Wentworth and

¹ O'Grady, vol. ii. p. 775.

² *Letters*, vol. ii. p. 121: Wentworth to Laud, Dublin, October 18, 1637.

the Commissioners punished them for encouraging contumacy. They were ordered to take the oath of supremacy—suspended by an Act of Grace—which, as they were Romanists, was tantamount to their being disbarred.

The decision that patents of estates granted so lately as the reign of James were liable to question was likewise decidedly unfortunate. Probably, they were often invalid; and the verdicts of the Council Board, which was a Court of Record, to whom the owner, assisted by counsel, referred the patents, were in essential legal verdicts.¹ But compromise is a useful ingredient in all human affairs, and unluckily Wentworth seldom stooped to compromise. Yet it cannot be denied that, if once the subject was opened, caution was required in accepting the patentees' statements. Ownership was often rooted in wrong rather than in right, and it was not always the righteous whose outcries were the loudest. Clanricarde's step-brother was one of several personages detected in presenting other men's estates as his own property. A short imprisonment in the guardroom for these "gentlemen of good quality" proved efficacious, but showed the snares awaiting a reformer of Irish land tenures.

Naturally, even Wentworth could not carry such drastic measures without protest, and a terrific uproar ensued. It would seem that, except in the cases of the jury and Sheriff, the Deputy had no intention of fulfilling his Proclamation to the letter. As he said, he wanted to put a difference between owners in Galway, "who force His Majesty to undertake a suit of law for his own", and other subjects who "acknowledge his rights".² He had meant to call the Galway bluff, and he fully succeeded. Immediately, freeholders by the score tumbled in, protesting that they only desired to obtain the same terms as the other counties.

In England, meanwhile, the cause of the Galway jurors

¹ O'Grady, vol. ii. p. 771.

² *Letters*, vol. i. p. 453.

and landowners generally was being expounded by Irish "agents", and efficaciously championed by Lord Clanricarde. The old Elizabethan Earl, the husband of Sir Philip Sidney's widow, died a few months after the Galway trial. Court gossips imputed his death to Wentworth's "harsh usage"; though "God and your Majesty know", the latter protested to Charles, "they might as well have imputed unto me for a crime that he was threescore years and ten".¹ Clanricarde's mantle fell upon his son, who followed Charles from one place to another, begging that Galway might not get harder terms than the other counties. His fortunes were, indeed, inextricably intermingled with the landowners of Connaught. And he would have been strangely unintelligent if he had failed to understand that he was the target for Wentworth's arrows. The Deputy made no secret of the matter. Like his great contemporary, Richelieu, he was convinced that the suzerainty of powerful vassals was the negation of law and order and the King's authority. He believed that to continue to the new Earl his father's governorship of Galway would strengthen out of all measure a subject, in his opinion, already too strong for that dangerous region, "the backdoor to invasion"; and reasonably enough, on the face of things, he considered that no subject should retain the untrammelled powers which Lord Clanricarde possessed in the whole countryside, not only in his heritable qualities, but as Governor-General of Galway. Subsequent events proved Wentworth wrong. Clanricarde was a pillar of royal authority in the coming years. But no man is a prophet. Wentworth, as he told Charles, honestly believed that the Plantation "will in the person of my Lord Clanrickard make an end of all Irish Dependencies, being now the only one considerable left among them: which undoubtedly hath been in the ages before us a strong and forcible means of many

¹ *Letters*, vol. i. p. 492: Wentworth to King, Dublin, December 5, 1635.

great disservices to the Crown of England, and of many grievous oppressions upon this People".¹

The time had come when a greater centralisation of administration was certainly inevitable, and probably desirable. It was no question of personal dislike with Wentworth. On the Earl of Thomond's death, though his son was one of the Irish magnates in whom Wentworth reposed entire confidence, he opposed his succession to the old Earl's governorship of Clare.² Mr. Bagwell considers that to have deprived Lord Clanricarde of the post was a violation of a royal pledge.³ But since patents for two lives were illegal, from a legal standpoint Wentworth could justify his recommendation. He could not know that Clanricarde was to be the Crown's stout ally in the Civil Wars.

Archbishop Laud has left a careful record of the debates between Charles and Clanricarde over the vexed question of Galway. The King was then on a royal progress, actively pursued by the young Earl. At Belvoir, Clanricarde approached the Sovereign with a conditional offer from the Galway owners, undertaking, if his estates were confirmed to him, to obtain the acknowledgements of the royal title. The King did not respond. He told Clanricarde that he saw "no great warrant he had to make himself so sure of the Galway men. They had offered him [Charles] a great affront already."⁴ Clanricarde bowed to the reproof and begged to renew his petition later. His opportunity came when the Court reached Tamworth. In the interval he had received a letter of attorney from the Galway gentlemen, who supplicated merely for His Majesty's favour and equality of treatment with the other counties. Charles replied "that this was somewhat; yet he could not tell how fit it might be for him to take that of courtesy which was

¹ *Letters*, vol. i. p. 450: Wentworth to King, Portumna, August 24, 1635.

² O'Grady, vol. ii. p. 787.

³ Bagwell, vol. i. p. 250.

⁴ Laud's *Works*, vol. vii. pp. 283-4.

his due", but that he would consider both that matter and the differential treatment to be accorded to the jurors. Clanricarde said that, short of confessing themselves "knaves", the jurors were willing to do anything. Upon which the King remarked that a confession of error would meet the case; and there it rested until the arrival at Woodstock, where, on the third time of asking, Clanricarde proved more fortunate, probably because he begged permission to "write fairly to Wentworth and ask his favour".

Laud backed Wentworth with all his might on this occasion, for he felt that the Deputy had to contend with a very powerful cabal.

Independently of the fact that the Queen had no liking for Wentworth, she was now urged to come to the rescue of her co-religionists, against whom she was told that a persecution was being initiated by the Deputy. There was no foundation for the story, but it enlisted her on the side of Wentworth's opponents and enemies, Vane and Lord Holland, who, in this instance, could also count on the support of a very different personage, Clanricarde's half-brother, the future Parliamentary General, the Puritan Lord Essex.

Ultimately a compromise was effected. After a jury had again been summoned and found the royal title, though a difference was made between the docile and the recalcitrant counties, the Galway owners were not mulcted of half their estates. The jurymen fared worse than their neighbours, but their fines were likewise reduced. Over Lord Clanricarde's property controversy long raged.¹ Wentworth combated the proposal of a regrant of lands and chiefries which comprised five out of the thirteen Galway baronies, or 60,000 acres in fee-simple and over 48,000 acres of chiefries. Nor was the Deputy conciliated when Clanricarde wheedled a signet letter through Winde-

¹ O'Grady, vol. ii. p. 794.

banke and Arundel to make him pay certain succession dues out of the Irish Treasury, the object of Wentworth's jealous care. This Wentworth refused point-blank to confirm.¹ The struggle dragged on, and at last, in 1639, Clancricarde carried his petition. He pleaded that he was on the verge of bankruptcy, and Charles yielded to pressure put upon him by Arundel, Vane, and Essex. Wentworth was not at hand to stiffen the King's opposition. He took time to reply to the letters despatched on the subject from England, and Charles surrendered with regard both to the property and the governorship.

Like a schoolboy who tries to excuse himself, Charles told Wentworth that "if through ignorance my bounty be too large, your slow advertising of the case is the cause".² Wentworth was aghast. He did not mince matters in writing to Vane.

"Faithfully, my opinion is His Majesty had much better have given him £100,000 out of his coffers in ready money, so great a prejudice will this example put upon the Crown in the course of the future Plantations. And with what modesty we shall take a full fourth part of the Lands from those who willingly submitted, nay assisted, in finding the King's title and give all intirely back to the Earl of St. Albans, leave him much better than he was before, I say, for my Part I do not know. . . . But when you write it is His Majesty's pleasure to have this grant to pass I obey . . . and so I quit my hands of the matter, and of the thanks, and passively do only what and as I am commanded; yet I am verily persuaded the effect of this will appear to be such, as when it will be over late, it shall be acknowledged in me. This not to be spoken out of animosity but out of Duty, faithfulness and Right Reason."³

However vicious we may feel the whole Plantation system, it is impossible not to recognise with Wentworth that

¹ *Letters*, vol. ii. p. 366: Wentworth to King, July 9, 1639.

² *Idem*, vol. ii. p. 361: King to Wentworth, Camp near Berwick, June 20, 1639.

³ *Idem*, vol. ii. p. 425: Wentworth to Vane, Dublin, July 9, 1639.

the passing of the Earl's patents involved strange inconsistencies and probably actual injustice. For instance, where other landowners were to pay $2\frac{1}{2}$ d. an acre, Clanricarde was excused any rent, while various glebes and impropriations recovered from the Church again reverted to him. Nor was it only Church property which would fall to his share; the settlement made it impossible for other owners to make good their claims "though never so just or equitable".¹ The die was, however, cast, and as Wentworth said, though he protested, he could only obey. The Plantation was never carried out. It was part of the price the Puritan members of Parliament paid the Papist landowners for their aid in bringing Strafford to the block.

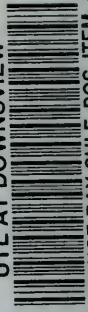
¹ *Letters*, vol. ii. pp. 366-7: Wentworth and Commissioners to Secretary Coke, July 9, 1639.

END OF VOL. I

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